

## Local people matter

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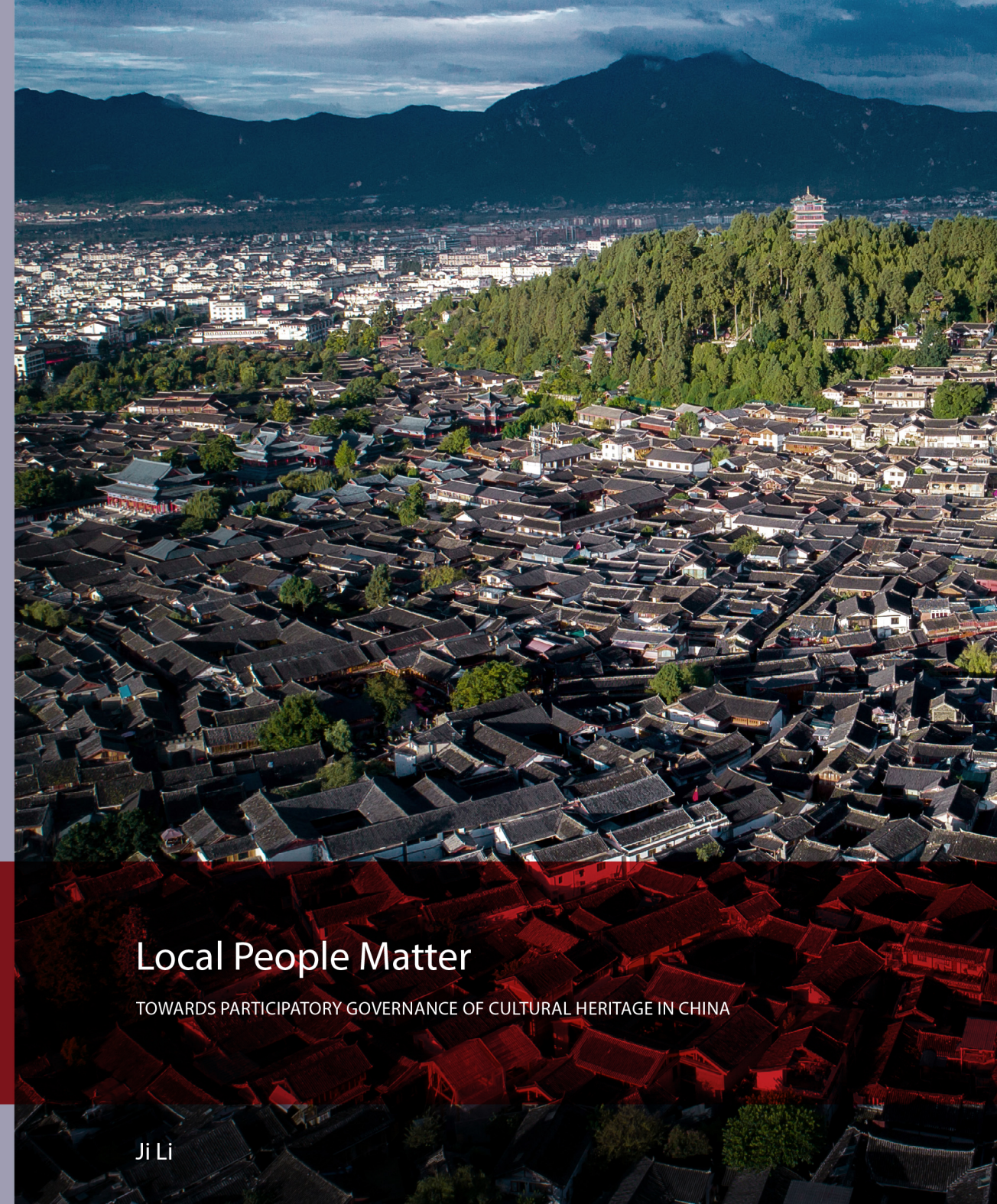


Heritage protection has been acknowledged as a scientific field since the beginning of the 20th century. Recently, a people-centred approach is developing to manage heritage and its cultural continuity associated with local communities. The characteristics of people's traditional lifestyles are then regarded as integral to the manifestation of heritage values and significance. It is an increasing consensus that local communities can play a key role in cultural heritage management, benefitting both urban conservation and socio-economic development.

As cultural heritage is not considered static or isolated monuments anymore, dynamic and integrative approaches are in need to bridge heritage management to broader urban planning and development contexts. Community development has been added to the working agendas of cultural heritage management. Community participation is then essential in cultural heritage management practices. By doing so, the needs, aspirations and commitment of residents are taken into account, to protect heritage as 'living'. This can improve the quality of people's lives and also sustain vernacular cultural identities, in response to ever-changing urban circumstances.

In the context of Chinese rapid urbanisation, local residents are often not included in the decision-making process of cultural heritage management. Local governments predominantly initiate and lead cultural heritage management practices, so inclusive participatory governance for heritage remains limited in China. Therefore, I conducted this PhD research to discuss the contextualised approach of community participation for cultural heritage management within Chinese state-centralisation and rapidly urbanising environments.

Local People Matter: Towards Participatory Governance of Cultural Heritage in China



## Local People Matter

TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN CHINA

Ji Li

DEPARTMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



# LOCAL PEOPLE MATTER:

Towards participatory governance of cultural heritage in China

## PROEFSCHRIFT

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To my family



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## Summary

With the adoption of the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), urban conservation is moving beyond the historical view of preserving built heritage through isolated objects towards managing heritage and its change, within the broader context of social, cultural and economic development in an increasingly urbanising world. Within the HUL recommendation, community participation is recognised as a pivotal tool for cultural heritage management practices. However, in China, local governments often occupy a predominant or even exclusive role in cultural heritage practices, while residents do not have sufficient platforms to express their ideas and have their interests properly registered. This results in a structural under-representation of the views, needs and ambitions of residents. Therefore, this thesis aims to advance the understanding and process of community participation for cultural heritage management within the Chinese context of rapidly urbanising development.

Compared to international cultural heritage practices, literature shows Chinese community participation has retained its contextual characteristics, including the centralised administrative role of governments, government-led participatory platforms, the co-existence of both top-down and bottom-up processes and a strong representation of local elites and business circles. Residents struggle to wield their power in decision-making processes. Furthermore, when a review was conducted, an assessment framework of community participation was still lacking within the literature of global cultural heritage studies. In response to this lack, an assessment framework was established in this PhD research based on both literature and policies and then applied to UNESCO reporting documents of Chinese World Heritage practices between 1987 and 2018. The assessment framework identified 23 indicators under four criteria: 1) participation in decision-making; 2) the competence of participants; 3) the right to social justice and confidence of participants; 4) empowerment and equity in cultural heritage management. Its application provided an overview of the state-of-the-practice of Chinese cultural World Heritage. It shows that only a small number of conservation projects on properties have been conducted with a relatively high degree of local participatory practices. A noteworthy example



is the Old Town of Lijiang, which was selected as the studied case in this thesis.

Inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1997, the Old Town of Lijiang consists of three housing clusters, Dayang, Shuhe and Baisha. All the three housing clusters were investigated to produce the findings of the current state of community participation in local heritage management practices and to discuss potential future improvements within the Chinese context. The Old Town of Lijiang has organised various participatory practices, including community and governmental meetings to engage locals in decision-making processes, lectures and cultural activities to enhance public awareness and capacities, and digital platforms to communicate with residents. Nevertheless, it is local government institutions, rather than grass-roots initiatives, that actually have exclusive power to control the social, psychological, political and economic factors and decisions that shape residents' lives. The degree of local participatory practices is minimal and lies between informing and consulting with reference to the IAP2 model.

To achieve the goal of enhancing community participation in Lijiang, and also in China as a whole, a participatory process of cultural heritage management was proposed in the research, based on local conditions and expectations. This thesis maintains the following: 1) local governments should initiate, guide and finance heritage practices; 2) residents need to be involved in the whole management process, including identifying local contexts, adjusting initial heritage schemes and approving final schemes; 3) local (business and cultural) elites and community-based organisations, as the representatives of residents, should play a strong role in collecting public interests and then negotiating with local decision-makers; 4) a legal requirement is needed to ensure local governments incorporate public feedback and interests, and prevent local political leaders from wielding exclusive power in decision-making processes. Chinese community participation in cultural heritage management has yet to find a firm foothold. Based on local contextual characteristics, it needs to develop a balanced methodology of both top-down and bottom-up processes to more directly include the needs, interests and dreams of local residents and better face the challenges of Chinese rapid social, cultural and economic development.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| CCH                   | Chinese Cultural Heritage Management  |
| SCH                   | Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management  |
| UNESCO                | United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization                               |
| UN                    | United Nations  |
| UNESCO WHC            | UNESCO World Heritage Centre  |
| WH                    | World Heritage  |
| WHC                   | World Heritage City   |
| WHL                   | The UNESCO World Heritage List  |
| HUL                   | The Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation   |
| HUL approach          | The Historic urban landscape approach   |
| ICOMOS                | International Council on Monuments and Sites  |
| ICCROM                | The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property |
| IUCN                  | The International Union for Conservation of Nature  |
| PNH                   | Natural Heritage Management   |
| SACH                  | State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China  |
| The Management Bureau | The Conservation and Management Bureau of the World Heritage Lijiang Old Town                   |
| The UNESCO OGs        | The UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention       |
| The Venice Charter    | International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites               |
| OUV                   | Outstanding Universal Value   |
| NGO                   | Non-Governmental Organization   |





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## **PREFACE**

### *First and Foremost, Motivation*

Born and raised in the 1990s, I have witnessed the unprecedented change and development of cities, towns and villages in China. Tons of old buildings were torn down and new ones then built, higher and bigger. I used to think about where these building occupants had gone, what their new life could be, why they had to leave and if they would have liked to stay. When I moved to Xi'an for higher education, I observed many conservational processes of archaeological sites being transformed into parks and museums, with the residents removed from the site. These people had no space for negotiation. It seemed residents' daily activities were no intrinsic part of, or were even contradictory to, cultural heritage protection. At the same time, the importance of residents was increasingly acknowledged in the field of heritage studies, policy and practices. I became inspired to learn more about how to achieve compatibility between people and heritage as well as between urban development and conservation. To my great excitement, I was then granted a PhD fellowship (2017-2021) from the China Scholarship Council (CSC), to undertake PhD research within the Living Cities program directed by Prof Pieter van Wesemael in his Chair of Urbanism and Urban Architecture at Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e).

In urban design and planning fields, bottom-up processes of decision-making have been well developed and implemented worldwide, for example in some European countries, in North America and in Australia. However, as China is governed by a different socio-political regime and local developmental conditions, both participatory approaches and processes could be complicated and different. Therefore, this PhD research focuses on the contextualised approach of community participation for cultural heritage management in China from a global perspective. The research is

cross-disciplinary, which is reflected in the expertise of my three supervisors, who specialise in urban architectural design, heritage and sustainability as well as urban sociology and geography, respectively. I conducted this research step by step, from reviewing academic literature, to analysing policy and then conducting specific empirical case studies. Throughout the whole PhD thesis, many heritage projects are taken into account to connect theoretical research to practical case discussions. In addition to its academic contribution to academia, I hope this thesis also provides valuable insights to policymakers and practitioners in the fields of cultural heritage management as well as architectural urban design and planning practices.

Doing a PhD is an exciting but lonesome journey, full of joys and sorrows. I am very pleased to share my PhD experience here with all of you, which is like a milestone reflecting my life over the last four years. When you get frustrated in research, hope it can inspire and motivate you.

### *Outline of the PhD thesis*

This PhD thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter I is the prologue to introduce the structure and logical flow of the whole thesis. Chapters II to V are the main body of the thesis, based on four correlative articles, previously published in international peer-review journals. Each of these four chapters has its own introduction, methodology, discussion and conclusion. Their conclusions are aligned to draw the final conclusion of this PhD thesis, presented in chapter VI. The outline of the thesis is elaborated as follows:

Chapter I is the introduction of the PhD thesis, including problem statements, research scope and design. In this chapter, the significance of community participation is demonstrated within global heritage management theories, policies and practices. However, it is also shown that Chinese inclusive participatory governance for cultural heritage has remained limited and that

further research is urgently needed. To explore the issues of Chinese community participation from academic, policy and practise perspectives, multiple methodologies are employed to establish the rational research process step by step, including a systematic literature review, a policy and professional discourse analysis as well as two empirical case studies. This chapter also provides a roadmap of the PhD research.

Chapter II comparatively discusses community participation within Chinese and other international heritage management approaches by conducting a systematic literature review. Differences and similarities between Chinese and international approaches are revealed, in relation to engaged communities, participatory platforms, degrees of participation and management steps. This chapter shows that Chinese participatory governance for cultural heritage has yet to find a firm foothold and differs from the international bottom-up process. The chapter concludes that it is necessary to promote a contextualised approach to cultural heritage management which fits into the Chinese local contexts of rapid urbanisation and state centralisation.

Chapter III analyses the policies and professional discourses of Chinese cultural World Heritage management to ascertain an overview of community participation and the latest practices at the governance level. It assesses UNESCO official documents reporting the state-of-the-practice of cultural World Heritage between 1987 and 2018 in China. An assessment framework of community participation, still missing in international cultural heritage studies, is then synthesised from all existing related frameworks. This developed framework identifies four criteria and 23 indicators. By applying this framework to the UNESCO documents, the assessed properties were categorised and their degrees of community participation were indicated. Through the assessment it was found that relatively high

community participation took place within the Old Town of Lijiang; therefore, it was selected as the case in the following two empirical studies.

Chapter IV explores community participation within cultural heritage management in the context of rapid Chinese urbanisation by investigating the current state of local participatory practices in a case study of the Old Town of Lijiang. The interview method, based on the assessment framework in Chapter III to develop the interview guide, was employed with local administrators and native and migrant residents. The interview guide includes four aspects, i.e., community participation in decision-making, the competence of participants, the right to social justice and confidence of participants, and community empowerment and equity. Through the chapter, different local community groups' perceptions, attitudes and experiences are comparatively analysed. Then, the degree of community participation and existing problems in Lijiang are identified and discussed, as was how they reflect nationwide cultural heritage management.

Chapter V tests and adapts an international participatory method, the (Ballarat) Imagine, to help enhance community participation in Lijiang, and also China as a whole. The Imagine method was used to explore community values and expectations within heritage management, to help better understand the HUL approaches at the local level. The Imagine method was tested as an academic scoping exercise, to examine its viability in Lijiang and then contribute critical reflections to general Chinese contextual approaches. In the three Imagine workshops conducted during the fieldwork residents responded to three Imagine questions focussing on their feelings about local historic urban landscape as well as their ideas about future public engagement in local heritage management. This scoping exercise revealed that the Imagine method was effective in identifying local heritage and its urban contexts in Lijiang. Based on the reflections of Lijiang's Imagine

method, Chinese contextualised community participation needs to seek a medium between top-down and bottom-up processes.

Chapter VI concludes the thesis by synthesising the work of previous chapters and discussing the contributions and limitations of the work. Combining all the findings of previous chapters, this chapter incorporates the case studies of Lijiang into the findings of chapters II and III within the international and nationwide contexts. By doing so, the PhD thesis can draw the conclusion, not only that community participation in Lijiang should be improved, but also that contextualised process of participatory heritage governance should be advanced nationwide in China. This PhD thesis can be a practical reference for Chinese governments and urban professionals to better manage and protect cultural heritage when facing the challenges of rapid urbanisation.



## Introduction

01

Chapter 1

Scope and design the PhD research, regarding community participation within cultural heritage management in China

Chapter 2

02

## State-of-the-art

Compare Chinese and international cultural heritage practices to identify the research gap in literature.

## State-of-the-practice

03

Chapter 3

Develop an assessment framework applied to the management practices of Chinese World Heritage; the Old Town of Lijiang is selected as the case.

Chapter 4

04

## Case study #1

Explore the current state of local participatory practices in the Old Town of Lijiang as the case.

## Case study #2

05

Chapter 5

Test an international participatory method of Imagine in Lijiang, to examine its viability and enhance local community participation.

Chapter 6

06

## Conclusion

Respond to research questions, conclude the thesis and propose future recommendations.





## Chapter I PROLOGUE

*Scope of the PhD thesis, problem statements and research design*

### Scope of the PhD thesis

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations, as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The protection and management of heritage has been acknowledged as a scientific field since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Khalaf, 2016). Recently, a people-centred approach has been developing to manage heritage and its cultural continuity associated with local communities, prioritising residents' needs, interests, dreams and values (Wijesuriya et al., 2017). The characteristics of traditional lifestyles are regarded as integral to the manifestation of heritage values and significance (Wijesuriya et al., 2017). There is increasing consensus that local communities can play a key role in cultural heritage management, benefitting both urban conservation and socio-economic development (Guzmán et al., 2017).

As cultural heritage is no longer considered static or isolated artefacts, dynamic and integrative approaches are needed to connect heritage management to broader urban planning and development contexts (Ji et al., 2020). The improvement of community daily life and local socio-economic development have been added to the working agendas of cultural heritage management (Poulios, 2014; Wijesuriya et al., 2017). Community participation is therefore essential in cultural heritage management practices (Ripp & Rodwell, 2015a). By so including community participation, the needs, aspirations and commitments of residents are taken into account and heritage protection includes the “living” (Haddad & Fakhoury, 2016; Poulios, 2014). This can improve the quality of people’s lives and also sustain vernacular cultural identities in ever-changing urban circumstances (Poulios, 2014).

In the context of rapid Chinese urbanisation, local residents are often excluded from the decision-making process of cultural heritage management (Fan, 2014; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Local governments predominantly initiate and lead urban conservation practices and also often have exclusive power in decision-making, so inclusive participatory governance for cultural heritage remains limited in China. Therefore, this PhD research has developed a contextualised process of community participation for cultural heritage management within Chinese state-centralisation and rapidly urbanising environments.

## Problem statements

### *Exclusion of residents in material-based heritage management*

In 1964, an international heritage organisation ICOMOS published a guidance document, the Venice Charter, showing an extreme focus on

protecting heritage in the form of physical materiality, which reflected a material-based management approach (ICOMOS, 1964). The 1972 World Heritage Convention later emphasised the critical role of the international and national experts but it did not refer to the importance of local communities and their participation (UNESCO, 1972). Consequently, cultural heritage management practices were led by experts, often in processes independent of the local communities and their needs (Bloch, 2016; Miura, 2005). With such a material-based approach applied, for example during the protection of Angkor in Cambodia, local religious communities were removed for the protection of temples and monuments (Miura, 2005). In the example of the protection of Hampi in India, residents living around the temple were “evicted” and their houses were demolished (Bloch, 2016). In both cases, experts exclusively conducted the management processes with the full backing of the governments. Local communities were not involved in the decision-making processes at all even though they disagreed with the final schemes (Bloch, 2016; Miura, 2005).

Within the philosophy of material-based approaches, residents and their daily activities are considered to be contradictory to cultural heritage protection (MacRae, 2017). Governments formulate institutional regulations to restrict residents from using heritage properties, following experts’ professional advice (Boussaa, 2014; Fritz & Michell, 2012). This often results in locals finding it difficult to make a living and improve their lives, so they gradually choose to move off the heritage site (Boussaa, 2014). In some Chinese cases, local governments even totally relocate all residents from such sites to build heritage parks or museums, such as the Daming and Xingqing Palace archaeological parks (Li & Zhai, 2016).

Current international policy documents have evolved to develop more inclusive and integrative processes, including the HUL Recommendations and people-centred approaches. But, in China at local levels and also some other international contexts, heritage practices sometimes failed to catch up with these international policies, resulting in material-based processes. Although material-based approaches in practice may protect tangible heritage attributes well, intangible attributes and socio-cultural values associated with residents' daily practices are effectively cleansed (Fritz & Michell, 2012; Poulios, 2014). Therefore, to protect both tangible and intangible heritage and also deal with local socio-economic developmental dilemmas and poverty, contemporary cultural heritage management approaches need to involve residents and their needs in decision-making rather than to follow a material-based process exclusively led by experts.

#### *Removal of residents in property-led urban (re)development in China*

In the developing world, many countries have made economic development a priority and have experienced rapid urbanisation for decades (Wu 2018, 2020). For example, since the policy of economic reforms was issued in China in 1978, it has undergone a dramatically rapid urbanisation process wherein market growth economic development has been prioritised (Xu, 2007). Facing the challenges of rapid urbanisation, Chinese local governments play a dual role of being official administrators and businesspeople and seek revenue maximisation for urban governance and (re)development facilitation. Within such an environment of state entrepreneurialism, urban planning centrality is an accompanying manifestation (Wu 2018). It is hard for the top-down hierarchical governance to reach consensus in practice among various stakeholders in China (Chen & Qu, 2020). Due to the state's dominance, a property-led approach has been applied to prioritise the

promotion of economic development within heritage cities and urban areas (Fan 2014; Wu 2016; Tan and Altrock 2016). Through the property-led process, the physical environment of urban areas can be rapidly improved, but in most cases, a great number of heritage buildings have been demolished and residents have been removed to other urban areas with lower land value (Fan, 2014; Shin, 2010; Verdini, 2015).

The property-led approach often rarely includes residents' interests and participation in the decision-making of cultural heritage management (Shin, 2010). This approach is pro-growth and views heritage as a competitive urban resource for cultural commodification (Su, 2011). Global investors, tourism operators and real estate companies are welcomed in this approach in order to facilitate the development of the tourism and housing market (Othman, 2017; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). Heritage properties are then over-commodified at the expense of cultural values (Srijuntrapun et al., 2017). Many residents rent their houses out due to increasing land value, and then they move to new urban areas (Yung et al., 2014). Besides, some residents cannot afford to stay anymore, so they have to leave (Arkaraprasertkul, 2018; Shao, 2017). With the cleansing of native residents, their traditional lifestyles, practices and other intangible heritage attributes are also removed (Shao, 2017). Various cultural, social and economic developmental problems have been identified, including the decrease of cultural identity, the increase of living expenses and over-commercialization (Othman, 2017; Verdini et al., 2017a). Therefore, the property-led approach can improve physical environments and economic situations while residents and their interests are excluded from decision-making, which can also lead to heritage destruction, population replacement and civil protests (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

*The theoretical gap of understanding and enhancing community participation in rapidly urbanising Chinese contexts*

Aiming to increase public engagement in decision-making and empower citizens rather than accept non-participation or token participation, the concepts of citizen participation, citizen control and community involvement have been subjects of controversy within the literature since the 1960s (Arnstein, 1969). As demonstrated in Chapter II, the concept of community participation is ubiquitous in the heritage field and urban literature, and it is seen as contributing to inclusive and dynamic heritage management approaches that seek to mediate interests between various stakeholder groups (Dormael, 2016; Walker, 2011). In 2015, ICCROM published the guidance document facilitating a people-centred approach to cultural heritage management through inclusive community participation (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015). Within this guidance, local residents are identified as a core community while governments, experts and developers are identified as a group of broader facilitators (Poulios, 2014). It aims not only to increase community participation in the entire management process but also to build a sustainable relationship between the daily life of residents and cultural heritage protection (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015). Considered to be the best practices worldwide, the current management of World Heritage properties seeks to protect both its Outstanding Universal Value and community values for residents at a local level (Buckley et al., 2015).

On the theoretical basis discussed in Chapter II, community participation for cultural heritage management has not yet been well established in China (Fan, 2014). China seeks to enhance public participation within national cultural heritage management and protection, but existing international theoretical frameworks of bottom-up processes do not fit into the Chinese

contexts of rapid urbanisation, state centralisation and profit orientation (Li et al., 2020a). As such, local participatory practices encounter various difficulties and residents still lack sufficient platforms to engage in heritage decision-making and profit-sharing processes (Ma et al., 2018; Shin, 2010; Zhang, 2017). Within such a local context of state-centralisation and efficiency-seeking, cultural heritage management practices are often carried out through a government-led methodology. The process of Chinese community participation should have its own contextualised characteristics, including community interests and needs in the government-led methodology. A contextualised process of community participation for cultural heritage management is urgently needed to balance urban development and conservation in China (Fan 2014; Verdini, Frassoldati, and Nolf 2017; Wu 2018). Therefore, differing from the international bottom-up process, there is still a theoretical gap in understanding how community participation can be enhanced in the rapidly urbanising Chinese context.

## Research Design

Community participation is pivotal for cultural heritage management to achieve sustainable urban development (Dormaels, 2016; Walker, 2011). However, inclusive participatory governance for Chinese cultural heritage is not yet well established. To further cultural heritage management in China, this PhD research has studied community participation from the macro to micro levels, including academic literature, official and professional statements as well as empirical case studies. And the research flow diagram is presented in Figure 1.



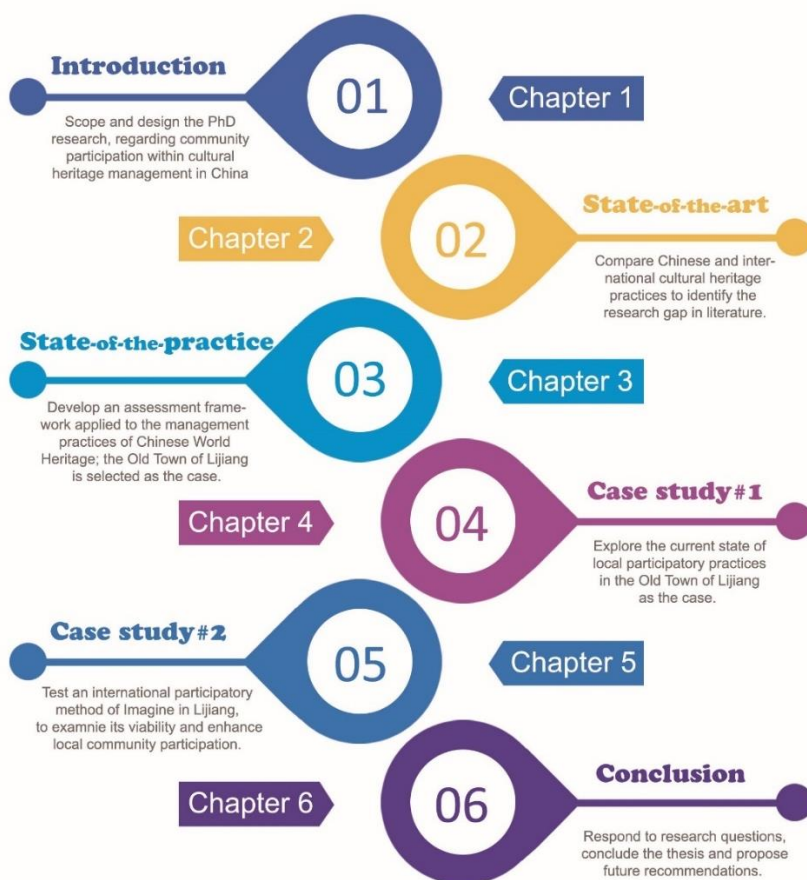


Figure 1 Theoretical research scheme of the PhD thesis

### *Aim & Objectives*

This PhD thesis aims to conceptualise and assess the contextualised approach of community participation for cultural heritage management within the rapidly urbanising Chinese context from a global perspective, by investigating a World Heritage city, Lijiang as a case study. Findings of this PhD research can provide better understanding of community participation as an effective tool in international cultural heritage practices and also its application in the Chinese urbanising context of rapid socio-political and economic development, contributing to global theories of bridging

sustainable urban conservation to development. Furthermore, this PhD research also has societal contributions to improve the social sustainability of Chinese heritage cities. The research objectives are as follows:

- To understand and conceptualise community participation for cultural heritage management in China from a global perspective;
- To build an assessment framework of community participation for international cultural heritage management by analysing publications, policies and UNESCO documents reporting the state-of-the-practice of cultural World Heritage in China;
- To explore local community participatory practices in cultural heritage management within the studied case, the Old Town of Lijiang;
- To test an international participatory method in Lijiang and then propose suggestions to enhance Chinese community participation for sustainable heritage management and urban development.

### *Research Question*

How can community participation in cultural heritage management be understood, assessed and enhanced within the rapidly urbanising Chinese context?

#### *Sub-Questions:*

- How is community participation in cultural heritage management conceptualised in China from a global perspective within the state-of-the-art?
- How is community participation assessed within the state-of-the-practice of cultural World Heritage protection and management in China?

- How are local communities currently engaged, and what are the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of administrators and native and migrant residents towards local participatory practices in the case of Lijiang?
- How can community participation be contextualised and enhanced to achieve sustainable heritage management in Lijiang by testing and adapting an international participatory method?

### *Research methodology*

In pursuing this PhD research, various research methods are employed, e.g. systematic literature review, content analysis, field investigation and quantitative and qualitative data analysis. These research methods constitute the methodologies for conducting the whole research step by step. In general, four published correlative journal papers are the main body of the PhD thesis (chapters II to V). Chapters I and VI are the prologue for the introduction and the epilogue for the conclusion, respectively. The employed research methods and the contents of each chapter are summarized below, as shown in Table 1.

In this PhD thesis, outcomes of previous chapters support later chapters. Chapter II involved a systematic literature review to ascertain an overview of the state-of-the-art of international cultural heritage management and to position current Chinese approaches. Chapter III furthered the understanding of community participatory practices by building an assessment framework with systematic criteria and indicators, which was lacking in international cultural heritage studies. After the assessment framework was applied to the official statements of 36 Chinese cultural World Heritage properties, it was demonstrated that several properties have

conducted relatively high participatory practices. Among these properties, the Old Town of Lijiang, as a living heritage property, was then identified as a suitable case for studying community participation and HUL facing the pressure of rapid Chinese urbanisation.

Based on the assessment framework developed in chapter III, the interview guide in chapter IV was developed to conduct the fieldwork in Lijiang, which investigated the status quo of local participatory practices. Local administrators, native and migrant residents were interviewed with the guide. The transcripts of interviewees' perceptions, experiences and attitudes were then compared through post-coding content analysis, to understand and assess the effectiveness of local participatory practices. To enhance local community participation, chapter V tested and adapted an international participatory method to examine its viability in Lijiang. The international method of Imagine was employed to organise three workshops in Lijiang, discussing residents' feelings about their HUL and expectations towards local participatory processes. Data collected from the workshops were analysed through inductive qualitative analysis. The reflections of this academic scoping research can contribute to the understanding of local heritage characteristics and protection approaches as well as the processes of community participation in Lijiang, and also China as a whole.

*Table 1 Research steps of the PhD methodologies*

| Research steps  | Methods                                       | Data Sources  | Outcomes  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chapter I Prologue: Introducing the PhD thesis - the scope of the research, problem statements and research design                                      |   |   |   |
| Chapter II<br>State-of-the-art  | Systematic literature review                  | Academic publications in Scopus, Google Scholar, Web of Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceptualising community participation</li> <li>• Comparing Chinese and other international heritage management approaches</li> <li>• Identifying the characteristics and problems of Chinese community participation</li> </ul>  |
| Chapter III<br>Professional discourses of state-of-the-practice   | Quantitative and qualitative content analysis | World Heritage documents from the UNESCO Website                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing international and Chinese national policies and related assessment frameworks</li> <li>• Building a targeted assessment framework of community participation</li> <li>• Assessing community participation within the state-of-the-practice of Chinese cultural World Heritage</li> <li>• Identifying a suitable case (Lijiang) for the next two empirical studies</li> </ul> |
| Chapter IV<br>State quo of community participation in Lijiang   | Post-coding qualitative analysis              | Interview transcripts from in-situ fieldwork                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating the current participatory practices in Lijiang</li> <li>• Interviewing with residents about their perceptions, attitudes and experiences</li> <li>• Exploring Lijiang's community participation and identifying existing problems</li> </ul>   |
| Chapter V<br>Enhancement of Community participation in Lijiang  | Inductive qualitative analysis                | Workshop transcripts from in-situ fieldwork                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testing and adapting an international participatory method in Lijiang to examine its viability</li> <li>• Organising workshops with residents to discuss their willingness to be engaged and feelings about the local historic urban landscape</li> <li>• Proposing suggestions to improve the local process of community participation in Lijiang</li> </ul>                          |
| Chapter VI Epilogue: Concluding the PhD thesis - Contextualising community participation for cultural heritage management in rapid Chinese urbanisation |   |   |   |

### *Original contribution*

This PhD thesis seeks to conceptualise, assess and enhance community participation for cultural heritage management in rapid Chinese urbanisation. The original contribution of the research findings is threefold:

- **Academia:** global scholars can understand Chinese community participation better and incorporate the findings to conduct further research on cultural heritage management in other similar international contexts. This thesis also aims to attract more studies on participatory heritage governance to advance modern theories of social and natural science disciplines.
- **Governance:** Chinese national and local governments can use the research findings to improve administrative systems. The research findings could help public administrators and urban decision-makers in policy formulation at the strategic level to achieve a balance between urban conservation and development.
- **Practice:** practitioners including heritage professionals, architects, urban designers and planners can use the research findings to build theoretical guides and effective communication with residents in order to support practical actions of heritage protection and (re)use.



## Introduction

01

Chapter 1

Scope and design the PhD research, regarding community participation within cultural heritage management in China

Chapter 2

02

## State-of-the-art

Compare Chinese and international cultural heritage practices to identify the research gap in literature.

## State-of-the-practice

03

Chapter 3

Develop an assessment framework applied to the management practices of Chinese World Heritage; the Old Town of Lijiang is selected as the case.

Chapter 4

04

## Case study # 1

Explore the current state of local participatory practices in the Old Town of Lijiang as the case.

## Case study # 2

05

Chapter 5

Test an international participatory method of Imagine in Lijiang, to examine its viability and enhance local community participation.

Chapter 6

06

## Conclusion

Respond to research questions, conclude the thesis and propose future recommendations.





## Chapter II STATE-OF-THE-ART

### *Community Participation in Cultural Heritage Management: A Systematic Literature Review*

**This chapter is based on a journal article published with Cities.**

Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2020) Community Participation in Cultural Heritage Management: A Systematic Literature Review Comparing Chinese and International Practices. *Cities*, 96, 102476. doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.102476.

Despite the growing literature on community participation in cultural heritage management, little research has been done on characterising Chinese approaches from an international perspective, at both governance and practice levels. This chapter, therefore, aims to fill this gap, by providing an overview that compares and discusses the similarities and differences between Chinese and international approaches. A systematic literature review of the state-of-the-art was conducted to explore these differences based on four specific themes: engaged communities, participatory platforms, degrees of participation and process steps taken within cultural heritage management.



## Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, the concepts of empowerment movements, public participation and indigenous voices in heritage management have been widely accepted and spread in some international contexts of European countries, North America and Australia (Xu, 2007). Community participation becomes an essential issue within both theories and practices of urban planning and development, and an effective participatory process is vital to enhance long-term sustainable heritage management (Landorf, 2009). Community participation involves a collaborative process between different communities to achieve common goals of community improvement and development (Rasoolimanesh et al. 2017). All concerned communities need to be empowered with equal rights to get access to information and address their interests and needs (Zhong and Leung 2019). When community participation is promoted for heritage management practices, its concept is defined as “groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations” can work collaboratively to discuss local concerned issues and ideas of heritage management (McCloskey, McDonald, Cook, Heurtin-Roberts, Updegrove, & Sampson, 2011, pp.3; Simakole, Farrelly, and Holland 2018). The concerned communities are people who value local heritage and are willing to sustain and pass it to future generations (Zhong and Leung 2019). The inclusion of the concerned communities and their needs in the decision-making process of local heritage management can contribute to well-accepted outcomes among the public (Yung et al., 2017).

With the approval of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), community participation is recognised as a fundamental tool in heritage management practices (Taylor, 2016; UNESCO, 2011; Veldpaus et al., 2013). The HUL recommendation seeks to involve public participation, in order to, among other aims, mediate conflicts between stakeholders, including residents, visitors, developers, experts and governments (Srijuntrapun et al., 2017; Verdini et al., 2017a). Moreover, the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (hereafter: the UNESCO OGs) have emphasised the importance of the participation of a variety of stakeholders in heritage identification, protection and preservation, as a worldwide strategic policy (Bruku, 2015; UNESCO, 2012) These guidelines attempt to ensure that local communities' needs are included and not solely the interests of experts or governments (Schmidt, 2014).

In 2003, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) initiated a Living Heritage Site Programme in the Southeast Asia region, including projects in Thailand, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015; Poullos, 2014). Based on this programme, ICCROM published a guidance document discussing the concept of living heritage and people-centred approaches to cultural heritage management in 2015 (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015; Wijesuriya et al., 2017). People-centred approaches develop a community-based process to inclusively manage cultural heritage properties connected to spiritual affiliations, vernacular traditions, social networks and daily lives of local communities (M. Khalaf, 2016; Wijesuriya et al., 2017). These approaches are positioned within the mainstream framework of urban planning policies

and practices, highlighting the roles and human factors of local communities (Ripp & Rodwell, 2015a, 2016; Sully & Cardoso, 2014). In this setting, cultural heritage is managed as a dynamic urban resource contributing to societies and communities in the present as well as to future generations (Dormaels, 2016).

Despite common international principles, differences between European and Asian heritage management approaches have been noted and recognised, caused by different local developmental conditions and socio-political regimes (Taylor, 2004; Verdini et al., 2017a; Winter, 2014). Taylor (2004) and Winter (2014) report that Asian countries place more emphasis on managing daily lives of residents as associated with local cultural heritage and improving overall living spaces under the pressure of rapid urbanisation. In line with this, cultural heritage management practices in China are mainly undertaken by local governments, as heritage is used as a cultural catalyst in the profit-driven processes for the promotion of urban socio-economic growth (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015). Some European scholars classify Chinese approaches as unorthodox because they rely on top-down management processes and emphasise urban growth over the conservation of built heritage (Verdini, 2015; Verdini et al., 2017a). Even so, as Verdini et al. (2017) point out, Chinese cultural heritage management has its own contextual identity and characteristics whilst still adhering to international frameworks and standards. Also, Verdini et al. (2017) suggest that sufficient and effective community participation for cultural heritage management has to be facilitated as a long-term strategic goal in China, to respond to this European criticism.

Given the centralised and profit-driven process of decision-making in China, cultural heritage management could easily become a top-down process (Fan, 2014; He & Wu, 2009). Local governments generate alliances with profit-driven developers to foster pro-growth urban (re)development and heritage revitalisation (Ng et al., 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Residents lack public participation opportunities and platforms, and governments have exclusive power in the process of decision-making (Shin, 2010; X. Zhang, 2017). Yung, Chan, and Xu (2014) point out that public participation is considered a practical solution to mediate the social tensions between different stakeholders (Fan, 2014; Verdini et al., 2017a). Some pilot projects have then conducted effective community participation, wherein grass-roots initiatives have achieved excellent outcomes (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015; Verdini et al., 2017a). However, the inclusive community-based process of decision-making in China still needs to be explored, understood and developed so that these pilot projects can be expanded on further (Fan, 2014; X. Zhang, 2017).

Despite the growing literature on community participation in cultural heritage management, little research has been done on comparing Chinese to international approaches. This chapter, therefore, aims to fill this gap, by providing an overview that compares and discusses similarities and differences between the two approaches. A systematic comparative literature review of the state-of-the-art was carried out by reviewing and analysing academic publications, as detailed below.

## Methodology

### *Publication collection processes*

The systematic literature review began with retrieving and collecting related publications and followed the review process developed by Boland, Gemma Cherry, and Dickson (2014). Two phases of literature retrieval were performed to collect related publications from current academic databases. We identified a series of keywords, namely China, Chinese, heritage, cultural, management, conservation, community, residents, people, public, engagement and participation. The first search strings in Scopus were finalised as TITLE-ABS-KEY (“communit\*” and “heritage” and (“participat\*” or “engage\*”) and (“conservation” or “management”)), and the retrieval returned 581 documents. This literature retrieval was conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018. A set of inclusion criteria was drawn up to help eliminate the low-relevance publications, as shown in Table 2. In this phase, 53 case studies were selected, and out of these were four Chinese case studies. To include more Chinese cases, we conducted the second search strings (“communit\*” and “heritage” and (“participat\*” or “engage\*”) and “Chin\*”) in Scopus and Google Scholar. We identified seven additional relevant publications focusing on Chinese cases from the last 15 years in the second phase. Overall, the 60 collected publications included 11 Chinese and 49 other international case studies, and these were all selected for the full-text review. Geographical distribution of these cases is worldwide and presented in Figure 2. These studies were from 5 continents, Asia (n=26), Europe (n=16), Africa (n=10), Oceania (n=5) and North America (n=3) but no cases were collected from South America. Reviewed cultural heritage types include historic monuments, buildings, sites, landscapes and also intangible heritage.

Table 2 Publication inclusion process

| Step | Publications  |           | Process  |
|------|---------------|-----------|--|
|      | International | Chinese   |  |
| 1    | 531           | 50        | Publications that were retrieved   |
| 2    | 478           | 50        | Publications retained after 53 publications published before 2004 were excluded        |
| 3    | 444           | 48        | Publications retained after 36 non-English publications were excluded                  |
| 4    | 217           | -<br>(48) | Publications retained after 227 low keyword-frequency (<12) publications were excluded |
| 5    | 171           | 40        | Publications retained after 54 inaccessible publications were excluded                 |
| 6    | 49            | 4         | Publications retained after 157 irrelevant-topic articles were excluded                |
| 7    | 49            | 11        | Publications retained after 7 Chinese case studies were supplemented                   |



Figure 2 Geographical distribution of the case studies by continents

For the inclusion criteria shown in Table 2, the selection process included seven steps related to publication time, language, keyword-frequency,



accessibility and relevance to the topic. A PICOSS tool was designed to assess the quality of each selected paper regarding the topic, which was then applied in steps 6 and 7 (Boland et al., 2014). The PICOSS tool includes the following six aspects: (1) population: local communities who live and/or work within or nearby heritage properties; (2) interventions: heritage management that engages local communities; (3) comparator: none; (4) outcomes: outcomes of participatory governance; (5) study design: participatory methods in case studies; and (6) setting: cultural heritage.

### *Review focus themes*

To analyse publication designs and outcomes, each case study was researched by using pre-coding methods (Elo and Kyngäs 2008; e.g. Guzmán, Roders, and Colenbrander 2017). These 60 selected publications were categorised as either Chinese or international, depending on the location of their case studies. They were then classified on their main focus, using the themes/keywords: (1) engaged communities, (2) participatory platforms, (3) degrees of participation and (4) steps within cultural heritage management. The theme/keyword (1) engaged communities, included the following stakeholders: residents, governments, experts, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), tourists and businesses (including small businesspeople, companies and enterprises). And then, (2) participatory platforms were categorised as questionnaires, interviews, meetings, workshops, committees and digital technologies. With regard to the (3) degrees of participation, the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) model was used (see Table 3): i.e., inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower (AbouAssi et al., 2013; De Leiuën & Arthurë, 2016). The sequence represents the extent to which community

participation varies from lower to higher degrees. Last, (4) the process of cultural heritage management takes place in three steps: identification to understand local contexts, programming to develop strategies and schemes, as well as execution to manage and implement actions (Veldpauw, 2015).

*Table 3 Modified IAP2 Spectrum of community participation degrees in cultural heritage management (table adapted from AbouAssi, Nabatchi, and Antoun (2013); De Leuven and Arthure (2016))*

| Participation Degrees | Inform   | Consult   | Involve   | Collaborate  | Empower   |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| Description           | To provide the community with relevant and objective information to assist them in understanding the management project, approaches and intended outcomes. | To obtain community feedback at the start of the management project to help with analysis, approaches and/or decisions. | To work directly with the community throughout the management process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are understood and considered properly. | To partner with the community to work through management problems, alternatives, solutions and decisions together. | To place final decision-making and future projects in the hands of the community. |

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used to review these 60 selected publications. For the quantitative analysis, the frequency percentages of the pre-coding keywords were counted, and then Chinese and international cases compared. For the qualitative analysis which forms the main part of this chapter, the discourses of the 49 international case studies were compared with the 11 Chinese case studies to characterise Chinese contextualised management approaches of cultural heritage from a global perspective.

#### *A quantitative overview of selected case studies*

As presented in Figure 3, the quantitative overview in focus (ratio between

the four main themes/keywords) distinguishes the Chinese and international studies, based on the review results shown in the Appendix A. Globally, the top three communities engaged in cultural heritage management are residents, experts and governments. Residents were engaged in most cases, slightly more on the international cases (98 percent) than the Chinese cases (86 percent). Governments were engaged in almost two-thirds of international cases (62 percent) while Chinese cases always included the government as the main stakeholder. Heritage experts were involved in most of the international cases (88 percent) and in more than half of the Chinese cases (57 percent). Furthermore, the participation of Chinese businesses reached almost half of the cases (43 percent), compared to the international cases (18 percent). Businesses have played an important role in the profit-driven processes of decision-making in China, in line with the local government's expectations.

Regarding community participatory platforms, the most popular platforms globally are public meetings (48 percent), closely followed by workshops (40 percent) and interviews (40 percent). Furthermore, the platform of forming committees (35 percent) has also been applied in China, indicating that local governments are trying to share more responsibilities with the general public. Moreover, digital technologies such as Geographic Information System (GIS), Remote Sensing (RS) and social media have become feasible platforms employed in these international cases but were rarely used in China (within the selected cases).

Within the degrees of community participation, informing and consulting are popular rungs achieved within global cultural heritage management. Involvement (as a degree of participation) in international cases was higher

(68 percent) as compared to the Chinese cases (43 percent). Similarly, the degree of collaboration in China was almost half (29 percent) of the international cases (54 percent). There was also no Chinese case that engaged residents to the degree of empowerment. For the process of management, international cases often engaged local communities from the identification phase (90 percent), but local participatory practices in China mostly occurred in the programming phase (71 percent). This syncs with the dominant role the government plays in cultural heritage management, and the empowerment of local residents in the decision making of the entire management process has remained limited.

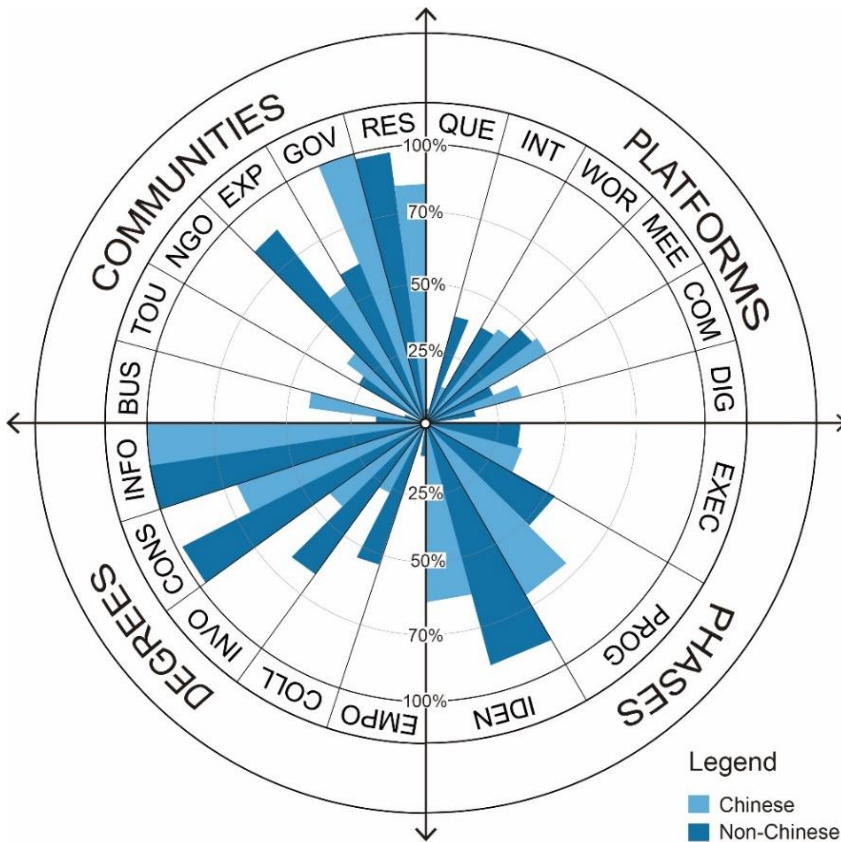


Figure 3 Visualised quantitative overview in the focus of research themes

## Establishment of a global perspective: international cultural heritage management frameworks

The international framework of cultural heritage management positions the review focus themes as follows: (1) community identification to define communities' roles and their connections to cultural heritage; (2) active participatory platforms to raise awareness and build capacities in local communities; and (3) community participation to integrate cultural heritage management in sustainable urban development (Husnéin, 2017; Labrador, 2011; Mackay & Johnston, 2010; Sully & Cardoso, 2014).

### *Community identification: core and broader communities*

International academic discourses have reached a consensus that a wide variety of stakeholders need to be engaged in the decision-making of cultural heritage management practices (Bruku, 2015; Human, 2015; Lewis, 2015). With regards to their roles and priorities, a distinction is recognised between core and broader communities who are defined as associated users and facilitators, respectively (Poulios, 2014).

Local communities living within or near heritage properties are both cultural custodians and associated users, and they are identified as a core community (Aykan, 2013; Borona & Ndiema, 2014; Poulios, 2014). Their daily routines and rituals are associated with local cultural heritage (Nic Eoin et al., 2013; Poulios, 2014). They maintain the continuous association with local identities, the sense of belonging, traditions, as well as ownerships and custodianship to the heritage (Lenzerini, 2011; Poulios, 2014). This makes them a key stakeholder group with priority, willing to sustain heritage functions and meanings (Poulios, 2014). In terms of heritage *per se*, this association only supports cultural meanings and significance if the

community continuously uses it to enhance local identities and traditions in their daily lives (Malheiro, 2014). Conforti et al. (2015) argue that the interests and opinions of the core community need to be well considered to enhance their motivation, willingness and capacities for safeguarding local cultural heritage. They need to be empowered in the whole management process with other stakeholder groups such as governments and heritage experts, fostering partnerships in decision-making and action implementation (Bruku, 2015).

The broader community, which spans experts, governments, NGOs and economic actors, is defined as a group of facilitators (Lekakis, 2013; Poulios, 2014). They need to support, guide and assist the core community in the decision-making process of local cultural heritage management (Chipangura et al., 2017; Lekakis, 2013). In terms of the roles of governments and experts, Cissé (2012) proposes that their duties are to facilitate collaboration and to share responsibilities with the public. Experts can provide scientific and technical knowledge whilst governments can decentralise management power to local communities and provide them with financial and administrative support (Tipnis & Chandrashekhar, 2017; Walker, 2011). NGOs are also important as they can empower residents by bringing in expertise and mediating between local communities and their governments (MacRae, 2017; Stephens & Tiwari, 2015). For example, the NGOs Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation in the UK and Luk Lan Muang Phrae in Thailand were each committed to fully taking charge of local cultural heritage management. They carried out communication and consultation with local communities, offered financial support and enabled the introduction of new commercial activities (Lewis, 2015; Poulios, 2014). Economic actors including developers, businesses and tourists are the main

drivers to promote local socio-economic growth (Ferretti & Gandino, 2018; Ghanem & Saad, 2015; Lewis, 2015). These stakeholders are indispensable in policy- and strategy-making, since cultural heritage resources are a crucial sector within the local economy and key for the economic sustainability of traditional community life (Rahman et al., 2013).

### *Active participatory platforms: awareness-raising and capacity-building*

Public participatory platforms, which can actively engage various local communities in decision-making with awareness-raising and capacity-building, are preferred in the heritage field (Borona & Ndiema, 2014; Mackay & Johnston, 2010). These platforms not only aim to collect the information about community interests but also to raise the awareness of local cultural heritage and build management capacities in the core community, in collaboration with the broader community (Poulios, 2014; Woodley et al., 2013). Ideally, the core community is willing to be engaged and then trained to be capable of undertaking management practice through a blend of traditional knowledge systems with experts' modern scientific assistance and governments' support (Wilson and Koester 2008; Atalay 2010; Chirikure et al. 2010; Sidi 2012).

Interviews are an effective platform whereby experts can consult with locals when co-mapping cultural heritage, such as the nature and location of intangible heritage (Fitri et al., 2017; Musa & Li Feng, 2016). Ferretti and Gandino (2018) employ both interviews and questionnaires with residents in discussing local issues and finalising management schemes. Public meetings are a communication platform on which local communities can express their aspirations and preferences during discussions with different

prioritised social sectors (MacRae, 2017; Stenseke, 2009). To share more responsibilities with local communities, committees formed by residents to assume the role of approving management strategies and schemes in public meetings are considered important (Bruku, 2015; Chinyele & Lwoga, 2019; Dormaels, 2016; Stenseke, 2009). It is a negotiation process wherein the community aims to protect their rights and benefits while raising awareness and positive attitudes towards local heritage protection and management (Mackay & Johnston, 2010; Ntui & Rampedi, 2015).

Based on local awareness and willingness to be engaged, workshops have become the most popular platform of building capacities in decision-making and benefit-sharing within cultural heritage management (Achille et al., 2017; Ferreira, 2018). Workshops not only work as a sensitisation activity to enhance local cultural identities and sustain traditional art (Bruku, 2015; Inniss, 2012; Kyriakidis & Anagnostopoulos, 2015) but also as a training process to educate communities about conservation knowledge and technologies (Ferreira, 2018; Husnéin, 2017). Interestingly, digital technologies including GIS, RS, GPS and social media have been included in workshop programmes in recent years (Achille et al., 2017; Fitri et al., 2017; Tipnis & Chandrashekhar, 2017). Residents can be then trained as local professionals to work with experts so that governments can share and improve digital heritage databases, contributing to decision-making processes (Achille et al., 2017; Tipnis & Chandrashekhar, 2017; K. Wilson & Desha, 2016).

### *Community participation for integrated cultural heritage management*

Current international approaches involve a public participatory process to



enhance the integration of cultural heritage management with local sustainable urban development (Cissé, 2012; Ferretti & Gandino, 2018; Husnéin, 2017). Residents, their cultural heritage properties and socio-economic activities constitute the living environments that span both heritage *per se* and its surrounding urban settings (Nagaoka, 2015). Through inclusive community involvement in the decision-making process, the tension between cultural heritage preservation and urban socio-economic development can be effectively mitigated (Lewis, 2015; Poulios, 2014).

The entire process of cultural heritage management from the steps of identification through programming to execution needs to involve a high degree of community participation (Achig-Balarezo et al., 2017; Oevermann et al., 2016). When local communities feel that they are truly included from the very beginning, they are more motivated to play roles as both information providers and management partners (Achig-Balarezo et al., 2017; Hammami, 2016). Local communities must then get involved in the initial consultation phase to help identify heritage attributes, values, and significance as well as local social issues (Bruku, 2015). Based on the identified information, in the programming phase, governments and experts can develop management strategies and schemes attached to wider urban development frameworks (Ferretti & Gandino, 2018; Lewis, 2015). Also, these strategies and schemes need to be approved by residents, ensuring their concerns and interests are well-considered (Chipangura et al., 2017). In the execution phase, partnerships are generated so that residents can be trained with skills of both heritage conservation and utilisation as local professionals (Chinyele & Lwoga, 2019; Ferreira, 2018). They undertake daily maintenance of heritage structures as well as collaborate with experts to implement management schemes (Ferreira, 2018; Poulios, 2014). Also,

locals can gain income and benefits from participating in heritage-based economic activities such as working as tour guides and festival performers (Borona & Ndiema, 2014).

Effective community participation contributes to a wider mobilisation of residents, thereby favouring local heritage along with positive grass-roots initiatives in both decision-making and benefit-sharing processes (Lewis, 2015). MacRae (2017) argues that the core of decision-making should be in the hands of local residents. Residents have a better knowledge of local realities and how to incorporate heritage management in community improvement. In addition, community-based initiatives contribute to outcomes that are well-accepted among the public (Kyi et al., 2016). Hence, it is necessary to generate high levels of participation from local communities in the entire management process (Chipangura et al., 2017; Human, 2015).

## Contextualised cultural heritage management in China

Parallel to the international practices, cultural heritage management in China is also experiencing a paradigm shift, towards preserving cultural heritage whilst managing the change of communities and heritage properties to facilitate sustainable urban development (Verdini et al., 2017a). This section discusses the contextualised characteristics of Chinese cultural heritage management.

### *Centralised administrative roles of governments*

Given the pressure from (international) inter-governmental organisations and domestic civil society, the Chinese central government has established local state institutes including Street Offices (SOs, in Chinese: *jiedao banshichu*) and neighbourhood Residents' Committees (RCs, *juweihui*), to

manage residents' daily issues (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015). These local organisations play an integrated role within the governance system, which spans communication with residents and the implementation of heritage management strategies from higher-level governmental institutes (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Therefore, neighbourhood RCs cannot be perceived as fully representative of residents, but rather local institutional representatives of the state in charge of informing residents about the decisions made by governments (Verdini, 2015). NGOs and civil groups in China, as Fan (2014) points out, have to attach themselves to governmental institutes to be legal when undertaking heritage projects, such as ICOMOS China, which is under the administration of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH, *guojia wenwu ju*) of China. SACH plays a fundamental role in issuing principles, documents, and announcements in the Chinese national management practices of cultural heritage (Wei, 2018).

With the centralised administrative role of Chinese governments, it is still difficult for local residents to wield enough power, as it is generally initiated as a top-down practice (Fan, 2014). Local residents are often considered nothing more than information providers and not the core community in decision-making (Verdini et al., 2017a). Regarding the broader community, the Chinese government aligns itself with economic actors who are the dominant players in the management process rather than empowers residents (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Local state organisations such as SOs and RCs, NGOs and other civil groups are strictly under the control of the national central government (Fan, 2014). Other actors such as real estate companies are also highlighted together with their economic development interests in the practice of cultural heritage projects in China (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

### *Government-led platforms and civil protests*

Within centralised governance in China, local residents are struggling not just to have their voices heard and but also for their rights towards cultural heritage management respected (Tan & Altrrock, 2016). From the reviewed Chinese cases, we recognised both “formal” participatory methods led by governments and “informal” protests initiated by either residents or civil groups (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

In the cultural landscape management of Shuang Wan Village, for example, interviews were carried out with the main decision-makers and local inhabitants. After that, a residential scenario workshop and a public meeting were held to ensure residents’ interests were properly understood and included in local development strategies (Verdini et al., 2017a). Interviews, workshops and public meetings were also positively used in some other Chinese heritage management projects including Tianzifang, Wenhuali and the Grand Canal (Fan, 2014; Wei, 2018; Yung et al., 2014). Through public participatory processes in the cases of Wenhuali and Hong Kong, the attitude of residents then shifted from being passive and negative to being active and positive towards local heritage and its management (Fan, 2014; Yau, 2009; X. Zhang, 2017)

The chance of civil protests and social tension between residents and governments increases significantly when there are low degrees of public participation and the management scheme of the project deviates from local expectations (Fan, 2014; X. Zhang, 2017). In the example of the Enning Road regeneration project in central Guangzhou, although public meetings and interviews were held with residents, their interests were not included in the management scheme. Following this, citizens wrote petition letters and held

civil protests. These methods were informal and can be considered as passive participatory processes, as an effort to support public voices and challenge the government's decisions (Tan & Altrock, 2016). A similar situation also arose in the historic urban area of the Drum Tower Muslim District (DTMD) in Xi'an. A resident committee (*siguanhui*) mobilised residents to discuss the government-finalised regeneration plan. The committee collected local petitions and presented them to multiple levels of governmental institutes, including the City's Municipal Government and the City Planning Bureau (Zhai & Ng, 2013). In another example, protest flyers and mobilisation through mass media were used to address local opposition and expectations in the South Nanjing project. Eventually, the urban characteristics of this heritage area were partly preserved to respect residents' interests (Verdini, 2015).

Regarding these government-led platforms to progress smoothly and avoid civil protests, both horizontal (among local various communities) and vertical (from the central government to residents) relationships are key between involved stakeholders in China (Verdini, 2015). It is necessary to effectively engage residents and incorporate their needs in management schemes through active public participatory platforms rather than in a tokenistic manner (Zhai & Ng, 2013).

#### *Co-existence of bottom-up and top-down management processes*

China is endeavouring to adopt the international view of integrated cultural heritage management, aiming to improve communities' living conditions and also protect cultural heritage values (Kou et al., 2018; Verdini et al., 2017a). Both bottom-up and top-down processes of cultural heritage management exist in China, based on the reviewed Chinese case studies

(Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015)

Chinese bottom-up processes appear synchronous with international frameworks wherein local communities are engaged in the entire management processes of several pilot projects (Fan, 2014; Yung et al., 2014). In the management process, residents act as consultants in identifying local cultural heritage and living conditions (Verdini et al., 2017a) before local aspirations and interests are programmed into official management proposals and plans (Kou et al., 2018; Yau, 2009). Through public approval, residents can be willing to collaborate with local governments in the execution phase such as in infrastructure improvement, housing renovation and reconstruction work (Fan, 2014; Kou et al., 2018). Residents can also gain income and further economic benefits from the collaborative practices as well as protecting their intangible heritage and traditional lifestyles (Fu et al., 2017; Yung et al., 2014). For example, Tianzifang in Shanghai is a case of a Chinese community-initiated bottom-up process (Verdini, 2015). In this project, local residents negotiated and partnered with different stakeholder groups including enterprises, artists and business owners. During the entire process, there were no exclusions of residents or forced relocations, and residents had the right to decide how to conserve and use their heritage properties (Yung et al., 2014). Essentially, the case of Tianzifang was an exception. Because of the misalignment between the district and municipal governments and the Street Office, there was an unusual opportunity for very strong bottom-up developments. So, it cannot be conceived that Tianzifang is a pilot project of community participation for cultural heritage management in China. During the successful Wenhuali project in Yangzhou, households were invited to contribute by sharing their needs and expectations (Fan, 2014). Within these

two cases, local governments provided both administrative and financial support (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015; Yung et al., 2014)

In contrast, the top-down processes are also happening within Chinese cultural heritage management as discussed previously. For example, when the local government undertook a heritage project in the old town of Yangzhou, numerous retailers were introduced and native residents were relocated. This may have positively impacted the urban regeneration of the old town as per the agenda of the government, but it excluded residents from decision-making and broke existing neighbourhood social networks (Fan, 2014). In the example of DTMD in Xi'an, although residents were involved in the finalisation of the management plan, during implementation it was discerned that the plan was not representative of residents and their needs. This then led to conflicts between residents and the government (Zhai & Ng, 2013). Unfortunately, in many Chinese cases, residents refuse to be relocated out of the original areas, but governments nonetheless attempt to release the land to real estate markets to acquire economic profits (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013)

To date, the participatory process of decision-making in China still lacks a legal system to ensure grass-roots initiatives are acknowledged within cultural heritage management (Verdini et al., 2017a). Top-down management processes are widespread due to centralised governance (Fan, 2014; Zhai & Ng, 2013; Zhang, 2017), yet bottom-up processes of decision-making have also been observed in several pilot projects with positive outcomes (Verdini et al., 2017a; Yung et al., 2014).

## Discussion

As China endeavours to incorporate itself into the global system, current international frameworks have a strong influence on Chinese approaches to cultural heritage management practices (Fan, 2014). Compared to international community-initiated projects, governments initiate and lead the process of Chinese cultural heritage management. Government-led processes are often in line with the interests of economic actors as heritage projects need both administrative and financial support. This increases the risk that the realisation of political and business agendas become prioritised over residents' needs and interests. To some extent, this government-led process deviates from international frameworks. In practice, however, it can also achieve well-accepted outcomes by the public, as long as community ideas, interests and expectations are genuinely included. Residents need participatory platforms and training opportunities with regard to the role they can play in the management process. Information on international frameworks, awareness-raising and capacity-building in local communities will enable Chinese residents to act as partners with governments and other social actors. However, within Chinese heritage management processes, it may be necessary to find a medium between community-initiated (bottom-up) and government-led (top-down) processes.

Under the pressure of rapid urbanisation and large scale redevelopment, cultural heritage management in China faces three main challenges: (1) insufficient community participation, (2) the profit-driven process of decision-making and efficiency-seeking, and (3) centralised governance. Though these challenges create barriers for the participatory process within cultural heritage management, it is necessary to find ways forward. More so as to avoid the exclusion of socially marginalised groups and boost the



understanding of local needs to solve social tension issues (Yung et al., 2014). International approaches recommend focusing on promoting the integration of cultural heritage management in sustainable urban development through community participation (Guzmán et al., 2017; Verdini, 2015). However, these approaches need to be adapted to work within China's local political and socio-cultural contexts.

## Conclusion

Community participation is a useful tool when applied globally in cultural heritage management. This chapter performed a literature review to ascertain a comparative overview of the similarities and differences between Chinese and other international practices within the aspects of engaged communities, participatory platforms, degrees of participation and steps within cultural heritage management. In doing so, the position of Chinese cultural heritage management in relation to international practices can be better understood. These results can encourage researchers focused on China to further explore and engage with international practices.

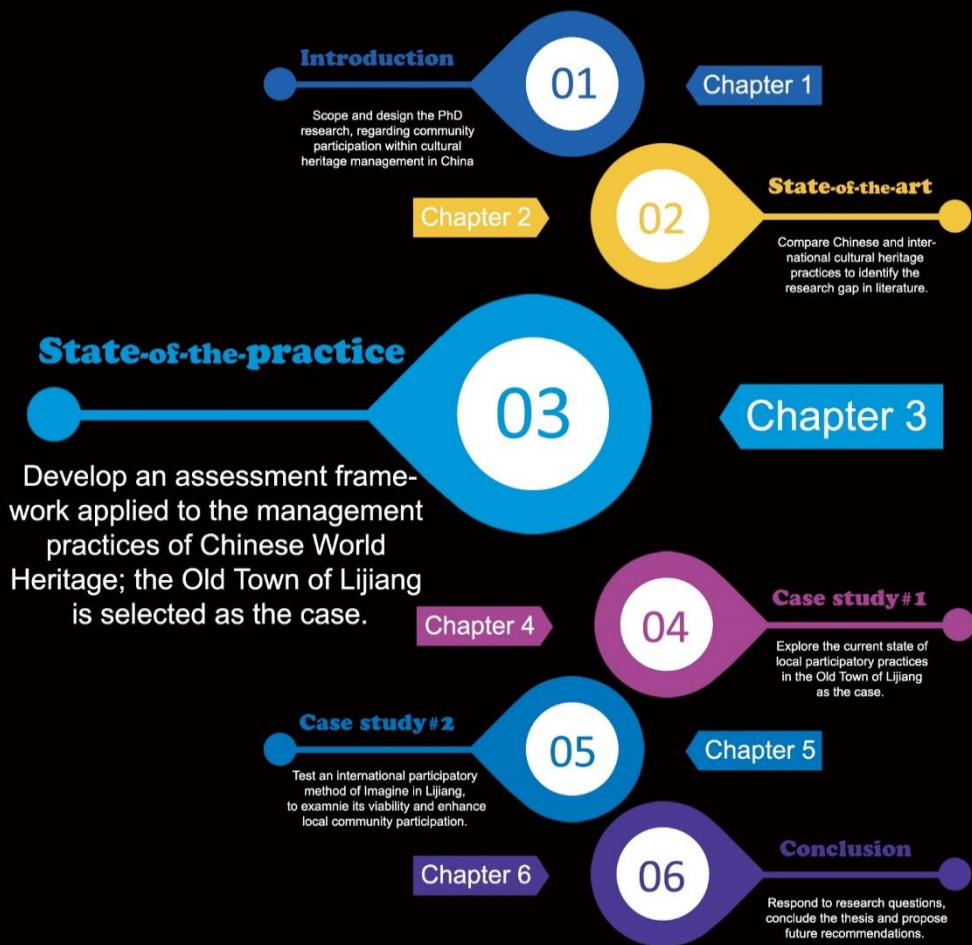
Within the international practices, local residents as a core community are a priority, while governments, experts and other social actors play a secondary role as broader facilitators. In China, the government has exclusive power and often aligns with economic actors in decision-making. Local state organisations including RCs and SOs have been established to manage residents' daily issues. Residents are often considered only as information providers rather than management partners, as they lack participation platforms, such as in the old town of Yangzhou. Even though, when people's needs are sufficiently discussed and integrated into management schemes, heritage projects can also receive local support better and run more

smoothly in China. Active participatory platforms of awareness-raising and capacity-building in local communities are needed to support residents' voices.

Due to the centralised and profit-driven processes of decision-making, top-down processes are easily applied to cultural heritage management in China, which differs from international practices. International cultural heritage management develops an inclusive and integrated approach primarily through a bottom-up process of decision-making. This process seeks to collaborate with and empower local communities in the entire process of cultural heritage management. In China, though top-down management processes are quite prevalent, bottom-up processes also exist. The top-down process is exclusive and encounters difficulties when working with local residents. Residents are engaged only to a minimal degree, such as informing and consulting. For example, the management process deviated from residents' interests within DTMD in Xi'an and civil protesting activities happened. Some Chinese pilot projects have carried out bottom-up processes of cultural heritage management, such as in Tianzifang and Wenhuali. Local residents were actively engaged in both decision-making and benefit-sharing. These positive projects should be researched further and expanded, to develop Chinese contextualised approaches adhering to international standards.

This chapter has reviewed global academic discourses, demonstrating that Chinese community participation is still nascent and has yet to find a firm foothold within cultural heritage management. Further studies and cases are needed to explore the compatibility (and potential adaptation) of international management frameworks to Chinese cases. In the following

chapter, a targeted assessment framework was developed to further the understanding of community participation within the Chinese practices of cultural heritage management.





## Chapter III STATE-OF-THE-PRACTICE

### *Assessing community participation within Chinese cultural World Heritage properties*

#### **This chapter is based on a journal article published with Habitat International:**

Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2020). State-of-the-practice: Assessing Community Participation within Chinese Cultural World Heritage Properties. *Habitat International*, 96, 102107. doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2019.102107.

The previous chapter has demonstrated community participation is limited in Chinese cultural heritage management, and its methodology differs from the international bottom-up process. However, unlike natural heritage, the nature of community participation within international cultural heritage management is seldom assessed, nor are there theoretical frameworks developed to baseline such assessments. To fill this knowledge gap, this chapter developed and tested an assessment framework, to characterise community participation within cultural heritage, through its application to cultural World Heritage properties in China. A qualitative method of content analysis was employed to code the texts of UNESCO World Heritage management documents.



## Introduction

Community participation has been recognised as a topical issue within heritage management theories, policies and practices worldwide: a phenomenon that seeks to facilitate an inclusive and dynamic process contributing to sustainable urban development (Den, 2014; Landorf, 2009). The UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (the UNESCO OGs) and its implementation promote a broad variety of stakeholders involved in heritage identification, protection, and preservation as a worldwide strategic policy (UNESCO, 2012). The vital roles of local communities, their traditions and lifestyle characteristics are widely recognised in the UNESCO OGs (Simakole et al., 2018; UNESCO, 2012). Besides this, with the adoption of the UNESCO 2011 HUL Recommendation, a new boost has been given to the approaches of urban conservation that, going beyond the historical view of preserving built heritage as isolated objects, to managing heritage and its change aside to urban contexts (UNESCO, 2011). Within the HUL approaches, community participation is recognised as a fundamental tool for heritage management practices (Taylor, 2016; Veldpaus et al., 2013).

Current heritage management processes are shifting from a centralised and exclusionary process to a participatory and holistic process, integrating heritage resources into local wider urbanisation contexts (Guzmán et al., 2017; Landorf, 2011). Community-based approaches are proven to support better integration between cultural heritage management, urban planning and socio-economic development agendas (Ripp & Rodwell, 2018; Wang & Zan, 2011). Grass-roots participation in decision-making can avoid the exclusion of socially marginalised groups and better understand local needs well, sustaining the continuity of the community's social networks and

cultural traditions (Yung et al., 2014, 2017). In addition, in rural cultural landscapes such as rice terraces, farmers continuously practice their traditional knowledge and management systems in cultivation, which can provide goods and services from the natural environment (Kladnik et al., 2019; Modica et al., 2013). Farmers play a core role in sustaining cultural continuity and interaction with the natural environment and agriculture (Di Fazio & Modica, 2018). Therefore, through public participatory practices, local communities can gain a sense of satisfaction in both decision-making and benefit-sharing in cultural heritage management processes (Fan, 2014; Yung et al., 2017).

In order to define community-based approaches further, international scholars have developed and tested tailored theoretical frameworks with specific assessment criteria and indicators (Landorf, 2011; Simakole et al., 2018). Although several assessment frameworks on community participation have been developed and then applied to natural heritage, the assessment framework for cultural heritage management is still limited and needs to be explored further (Dhliwayo et al., 2009; Landorf, 2011; Simakole et al., 2018). The ones applied to natural heritage management generally neglect an integrated view of bridging heritage management with urban planning and socio-economic development (Landorf, 2009; Simakole et al., 2018; Verdini, 2015). Because current cultural heritage management, especially in regions such as Asia and Africa, is facing great pressure from rapid urbanisation (Logan 2018; Zhang and Li 2016). In China, cultural heritage management practices mainly rely on the collaboration and alliance between governmental agencies and profit-driven business people/developers (Shin 2010; Zhang and Li 2016; Wu 2018). As a result, local communities have limited power as these collaborative activities are



initiated from the top (F. Chen, 2011; Fan, 2014; Logan, 2018). In line with this, the establishment of a targeted assessment framework is urgently required, to facilitate effective community participation for cultural heritage management within sustainable urban development (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015; Wang & Zan, 2011).

This chapter aims to develop and test an assessment framework, to characterise community participation in cultural heritage management. Based on the conceptualisation of community participation from both international and Chinese national heritage management policies, a literature review was conducted to develop an assessment framework, including four criteria and 23 indicators. This assessment framework was tested on the management practices of 36 Chinese cultural heritage properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL), from 1987 to 2018. Using content analysis as a method, this chapter applied this assessment framework to official documents submitted by the States Parties of China to UNESCO about the Chinese World Heritage properties, to report and discuss the state-of-the-practice of cultural heritage management. The results provide an overview of the current situation on how community participation is positioned within World Heritage management in China. Moreover, the assessment framework of community participation in heritage management has been extended and improved, which is relevant to heritage management practices worldwide.

## Methodology

### *Case selection and data collection*

World Heritage properties are considered to promote the best practices of heritage management worldwide (Landorf, 2011). Following the UNESCO

1972 World Heritage Convention, to be inscribed on the UNESCO WHL, a cultural and/or natural heritage property must meet criteria to evidence its *Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)* (Pereira Roders & van Oers, 2010; UNESCO, 1972). Essentially, managing World Heritage is an OUV-based process of definition and constant monitoring (Pereira Roders & van Oers, 2010). The 1972 World Heritage Convention stated the important role of the international community and the States Parties but it did not make reference to the importance of local communities and their engagement (UNESCO, 1972). Consequently, World Heritage management practices were led by experts, often in processes alienated from the local communities and their needs (Bloch, 2016; Miura, 2005). Over time, the implementation of the World Heritage Convention came to acknowledge the importance of local communities (Landorf, 2009; Ripp & Rodwell, 2018), and their engagement within OUV-based management processes (Atalay, 2010; Chirikure et al., 2010; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017).

As of 2018, China has 53 heritage properties inscribed on the UNESCO WHL and 36 of these are cultural properties. This chapter reports and discusses the state-of-the-practice, based on these 36 cultural properties in nomination, evaluation, protection and management, reported through UNESCO official documents. The documents include Nomination files, Advisory Bodies Evaluations, Periodic Reporting Reports, State of Conservation Reports and other related reports. These documents are available data from the UNESCO World Heritage website (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>), retrieved in November 2018.

### *Establishment of an assessment framework*

To establish a targeted assessment framework of community participation for cultural heritage, this chapter reviewed supranational and Chinese national policies on World Heritage management, as well as existing theoretical assessment frameworks from academic literature. The criteria to select these reviewed policy documents were to decree guidance on World Heritage management at both supranational and national levels of governance. All documents that do not directly address community participation, community values and development were excluded from this policy analysis. Supranational policies included international conventions and agendas adopted by international inter-governmental organisations, such as the UNESCO OGs (UNESCO, 2012) and the Budapest Declaration (UNESCO, 2002). Chinese national policies included regulations and laws such as the Administrative Measures for the Protection of World Cultural Heritage (2006). By reviewing these policies, even though they have addressed community participation, the research found no assessment framework to assess community participation in cultural heritage management.

Subsequently, a literature review was further conducted to develop an assessment framework, merging the existing heritage-based management frameworks on community participation, which could be applicable to cultural heritage in China and also the whole globe. Assessment frameworks are known to help raise transparency, enable systematic comparison, and better link heritage management to sustainable development goals, and therefore, could contribute to understanding the diversity and efficiency in levels of community engagement in (Chinese) World Heritage management (Landorf, 2011; Li et al., 2020a; Simakole et al., 2018). The reviewed

frameworks include participatory natural heritage management (PNH), sustainable cultural heritage management (SCH) and (studies of) Chinese cultural heritage management (CCH). Within these three frameworks, only PNH is a targeted assessment framework of community participation. SCH and CCH are broader frameworks including related indicators, which can help bridge cultural heritage management to urban planning and development within Chinese contexts. Therefore, on the basis of the framework of PNH, adapting its natural heritage context to cultural heritage, criteria and indicators from SCH and CCH were discussed and then introduced to the developed assessment framework.

#### *Content analysis in the assessment process*

Relying on the research method of content analysis (e.g. Landorf 2011; Simakole, Farrelly, and Holland 2018), the developed assessment framework was applied to analyse the professional discourses of the UNESCO official documents qualitatively. Criteria and indicators in the assessment framework were used to categorise the texts of the documents. Through the document reviewing process, a check of criteria/indicators in each of the 36 cultural properties was conducted to provide an overview of the participatory practices. Indicators were further refined as keywords to clarify their definitions and prevent misinterpretation. For example, in indicator 1.6 within the assessment framework in Table 4, the access to management information was refined as platforms such as websites and public meetings. In indicator 3.3, tenure rights to heritage properties were refined as ownership.

The coded texts were assessed and then discussed, and the two main focused aspects of the assessment were: (1) the state of the public

participatory practices of each property, and (2) the management practices of Chinese World Heritage in response to each indicator. Through this process, we also counted the number of indicators that each property meets, categorising these properties from high to low degrees of community participation. Then, the number of properties under each of the indicators was counted to demonstrate Chinese general practices for facilitating public participation. The numerical results were incorporated in the discussion section to help demonstrate the qualitative assessment.

In this chapter, only the management practices reported in the official documents of cultural World Heritage in China were assessed. Therefore, the results presented, in principle, are solely reflective of how the World Heritage properties and related heritage management practices are reported by the States Parties of China.

### **Conceptualisation of community participation within heritage management policies**

Currently, the concept of community participation broadly indicates the relationships of collaboration, partnership, consultation and involvement between governments, heritage managers, experts and residents (Simakole et al., 2018). Still, engaging local residents living or working within the heritage area in the management process is fundamental of fostering genuine community participation (Ginzarly et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020a; Zhong & Leung, 2019). This section has reviewed both supranational and Chinese national policies for World Heritage management to conceptualise community participation.

### *Supranational Policies*

International heritage communities have formulated several supranational policies, seeking to engage local communities and ensure their interests are included in the decision-making of World Heritage management (Pereira Roders & van Oers, 2010; Schmidt, 2014). The UNESCO OGs claim that the range of involved stakeholders necessarily spans “site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, NGOs and other interested parties and partners” (pp.3, Article 12). Following the UNESCO OGs, State Parties are recommended to take responsibility for integrating heritage management into urban planning frameworks and sustaining heritage functions in socio-economic development to achieve broad community goals. The goals include the protection of the heritage’s physical attributes, traditional lifestyles, cultural continuity and the improvements of local livelihoods. In the Budapest Declaration (UNESCO, 2002), the World Heritage Committee emphasised the importance to balance heritage conservation and urban development, setting the goals for socio-economic development and the quality of life of local communities. Sustainable development is connected to heritage management and community values with common local interests. As Faro Convention (2005) stated, it is recommended to enhance the understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society, recognising heritage uses and meanings are attached to local populations. The Nara+ 20 (2015) on Heritage Practices, Cultural Values, and the Concept of Authenticity, states the responsibility of heritage management should be shared among the local community and the cultural bearers, who generated or cared for cultural heritage.

The UNESCO OGs also state that the competence of local communities is the foundation of fostering public participation in heritage management.

ICOMOS (2008) addresses heritage interpretation and presentation activities should be accessible and offer educational training to the public for awareness-raising and capacity-building. Besides this, the rights and fairness of native people, local communities and other concerned groups need to be primarily ensured (IUCN, 2008). Local communities should be continuously consulted and granted access to information about the implications, benefits, costs and consequences of World Heritage projects (UNESCO, 2004). Cultural heritage management requires efforts to protect native communities and maintain their traditional practices (ICOMOS, 2011). The traditional practices of both tangible and intangible values are essential to the authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage (ICOMOS, 2010). In line with this, ICCROM (2015) has published a document characterising the concept of living heritage and discussing a living heritage approach. Within the living heritage concept, the native community is empowered in cultural heritage protection and exploitation practices, aiming to enhance local cultural identities and customs, social inclusion and stability, as well as economic growth.

### *Chinese National Policies*

Drawing on supranational policies, some national policies, regulations and laws have been issued to manage World Heritage in China. In 2006, the Chinese Ministry of Culture formulated a core policy document, the Administrative Measures for the Protection of World Cultural Heritage. It states that “the state encourages the citizens, legal persons and other organizations to participate in the protection of Cultural World Heritage” (Article 7) to protect public benefits and rights. Following the Cultural Relics Protection Law of the PRC, private, collective and state ownership of heritage are equally protected by the law to promote fairness and rights of

local residents. In the Regulation on the Protection of Famous Historical and Cultural Cities, Towns and Villages, it states every citizen has the right to know the conservation scopes and planning schemes of cultural heritage projects. The procedures of soliciting and approving public opinions must be established before working out planning schemes, as written in the Measures for the Administration of City Purple Lines, issued by the Ministry of Housing & Urban-Rural Development of China in 2004.

The central government has established local government institutes in charge of the daily management of heritage and collaboration with residents. These local institutes are under the strict control of upper-level governments and all management actions need to be approved by the national central government (Fan, 2014). Following national policies, such as in Lijiang, the local conservation plan sets out one of the main principles is “positive protection through community participation and the active involvement from tourists and migrant business people” (Su 2010, pp.166). The goal of community improvement and socio-economic promotion has been set in policy-making to better face the challenges of rapid urbanisation in the Measures for the Administration of City Purple Lines.

Both supranational and national policies emphasize the importance of community participation in cultural heritage management, embracing various facets of citizen involvement in decision-making while enhancing their competence, rights and empowerment. Heritage properties are managed as a dynamic resource in sustainable urban development to improve local community life. Based on these legal, policy and institutional provisions, a literature review on relevant frameworks was conducted to



develop an assessment framework of community participation for cultural heritage management.

## The developed assessment framework of community participation for cultural heritage management

International scholars have proposed several theoretical (assessment) frameworks of community participation for heritage management. In the context of natural heritage management, Dhliwayo et al. (2009) worked out criteria and indicators to facilitate the participation of rural communities in South Africa. Drawing on this framework, Simakole et al. (2018) extended it to assess the provisions for effective community participation in a protected natural area in Zambia (Simakole et al., 2018). These assessment frameworks have hitherto only been applied to natural heritage management. They have systematic criteria and indicators without addressing the necessity of the integration between heritage management and urban development (Dhliwayo et al., 2009; Simakole et al., 2018). Therefore, of these assessment frameworks focusing on participatory natural heritage management (PNH), the four criteria and 15 indicators are identified as the basis and also adapted to be applied to cultural heritage. For example, the ownership of land in the natural heritage framework has been adapted to the ownership of properties including buildings, sites and monuments for cultural heritage. And in the following sections, we discussed several collected broader frameworks to help bridge cultural heritage management with urban planning and development.

Current approaches to cultural heritage management are positioned within mainstream urban planning and development theories (Ripp & Rodwell, 2015a, 2016; Ruhanen, 2004). Characteristics such as safety, fairness and

sense of place in communities can optimise the managerial outcomes of cultural heritage projects in dynamic urban contexts (Leus & Verhelst, 2018). These management approaches are essentially incorporated into local socio-economic development and community improvement (Landorf, 2011; Ruhanen, 2004; Simpson, 2001). Communities' cultural identities and traditional lifestyles are primarily protected while they boost socio-economic activities to meet residents' demands for everyday life (Borona & Ndiema, 2014; Elsorady, 2012). Within broader urban planning domains, related indicators of community participation are embraced in the frameworks used to assess the sustainable management of cultural World Heritage properties in the UK (Landorf, 2009, 2011). In these frameworks, Landorf (2009; 2011) employed indicators from both heritage management and urban planning fields. Community values, attitudes and roles are highlighted, and the breadth and degree of participation were identified at the beginning of the strategy-making phase (Landorf, 2011). Therefore, based on the integrated process of sustainable cultural heritage management (SCH), seven extra indicators were included in the developed assessment framework, including identification of community goals, prioritisation of developmental objectives, review of management partnerships, assigned responsibilities, supportive role of government, community values and assessment of local social issues. To test this assessment framework, reported documents on Chinese heritage management were reviewed to further improve this framework.

Cultural heritage is recognised as a strong force for urban socio-economic development in China through insights from local empirical studies (Kou et al., 2018; Yung et al., 2014). Verdini (2015) states the success of progressing public participation is based on both vertical and horizontal relationships.

Governments should decentralise management power and devolve it to actors at the local level. Local state institutions are committed to fostering strong partnerships with professionals, NGOs and residents to support public voices. Kou et al. (2018) position the indicators of community participation within an evaluation model of urban sustainability, in reference to the scope and depth of participation, the assessment of communities' satisfaction, and the level of publicity and education. Yung et al. (2014) report public involvement opportunities as a key factor in contributing to social sustainability in China. This study suggests partnership opportunities should be generated for locals in cultural heritage restoration, accessible uses and other related activities. Community identities are important when handling local issues resulting from rapid urbanisation; community values, traditional lifestyles and intangible heritage are also underlined (Wang & Zan, 2011). Besides the pressure of rapid urbanisation, Chinese World Heritage management is also struggling to achieve financial stability (Wang and Zan 2011; Wu et al. 2019). Collaborative funding frameworks are requested for financial support from both governments and the public. Economic revenues from heritage-related activities such as entrance fees are used to cover the cost of daily maintenance and provide an income for locals (Su, 2010; Wang & Zan, 2011). In reviewing Chinese cultural heritage management (CCH), we noted that local communities would also like the opportunities for competence-building and participating in heritage-related business to reduce the poverty levels of residents (Wang & Zan, 2011). This finding added another indicator of the adequacy of heritage-related business skills for communities into the assessment framework. Therefore, the developed assessment framework, as shown in Table 4, includes four criteria and 23 indicators, and the assessed results are discussed in the following section.

*Table 4 Assessment framework of community participation for cultural heritage management*

| 4 Criteria   | 23 Indicators  |
|--|--|
| 1 Participation in decision-making processes for cultural heritage management                        | <p>1.1 Indicating identification of broad-based community goals (SCH)</p> <p>1.2 Indicating prioritization of objectives through communities' participation (SCH)</p> <p>1.3 Indicating local communities in decision-making bodies (PNH)</p> <p>1.4 Indicating requirement for agencies to implement community representation (PNH, SCH)</p> <p>1.5 Indicating prescribed levels of community representation (PNH)</p> <p>1.6 Indicating access to management information by communities (PNH)</p> <p>1.7 Indicating partnerships in the management process between local communities, private sectors and government agencies (PNH, SCH, CCH)</p> <p>1.8 Indicating evaluation and review of management partnerships (SCH)</p> <p>1.9 Indicating decentralisation of heritage management powers to local communities (PNH, SCH, CCH)</p> <p>1.10 Indicating assigned responsibilities across communities (SCH)</p> <p>1.11 Indicating supportive roles of governmental agencies in building management partnerships (SCH, CCH)</p> |
| 2 Competence of participants to participate in the cultural heritage management process              | <p>2.1 Indicating requirement for the promotion of heritage management awareness-raising, knowledge and understanding within communities (PNH, CCH)</p> <p>2.2 Indicating the development of skills and capacity-building within communities to participate in heritage management (PNH)</p> <p>2.3 Indicating adequacy of heritage-related business skills possessed to communities (CCH)</p>   |
| 3 Right to social justice and confidence of participants in the cultural heritage management process | <p>3.1 Indicating community-based organisations recognized by the national laws and policies or authorities to participate in heritage management (PNH, SCH)</p> <p>3.2 Indicating support for local communities to have legal recourse to challenge decisions that do not promote their interests (PNH, SCH)</p> <p>3.3 Indicating tenure rights to heritage properties and other resources by communities (PNH, SCH, CCH)</p>  |
| 4 Empowerment and equity in the cultural heritage management process                                 | <p>4.1 Indicating equitable distribution of heritage management benefits (PNH, SCH, CCH)</p> <p>4.2 Indicating a collaborative funding framework for the costs arising from heritage management (PNH, SCH, CCH)</p> <p>4.3 Indicating fairness by ensuring the full range of potentially affected individuals is identified (PNH, SCH)</p> <p>4.4 Indicating representation and participation of women, youth and other socially disadvantaged groups on decision-making bodies (PNH)</p> <p>4.5 Indicating identification of local communities' values, attitudes and lifestyle characteristics (SCH, CCH)</p> <p>4.6 Indicating identification and assessment of local critical issues for communities (SCH, CCH)</p>  |

## Research findings and discussion

The initial document analysis revealed that the emphasis of World Heritage management in China has been placed more importance on the physical materiality and *OUV* rather than traditional community life. Still, the understanding of cultural World Heritage properties has expanded; in addition to monuments, buildings and sites, intangible heritage and cultural landscapes regarding human socio-cultural activities have also been included. Community values and roles are highlighted in the management process. By applying the assessment framework, this section discusses the state-of-the-practice of community participation within cultural World Heritage management in China, following the major themes stemming from the content analysis.

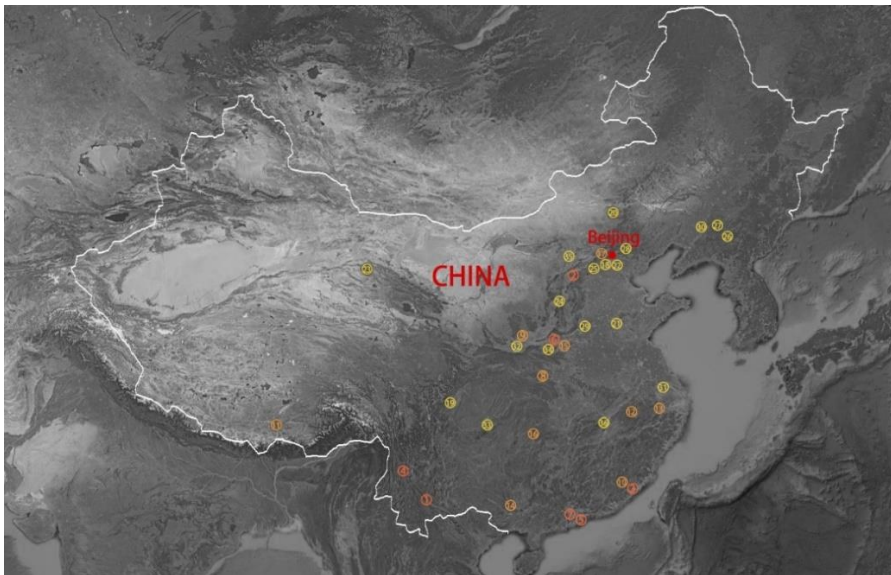
### *Overview of community participation within World Heritage management in China*

The number of indicators that each property meets was counted and presented in Table 5 and the World Heritage locations are as shown in Figure 4. These World Heritage properties were ranked based on the indicator amount as follows:

- 19 to 23 indicators: none
- 13 to 18 indicators: seven properties: Honghe Hani Rice Terraces (see Figure 5), Mount Wutai, Kulangsu, Old Town of Lijiang, Historic Centre of Macao, The Grand Canal, and Kaiping Diaolou and Villages.
- 7 to 12 indicators: 10 properties: Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (see Figure 6), Silk Roads, Fujian Tulou, Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Xidi and Hongcun, West Lake Cultural Landscape, Zuojiang Huashan Rock Art Cultural Landscape, Historic

Monuments of Dengfeng, Tusi Sites, and The Great Wall.

- 0 to 6 indicators: 19 properties: Summer Palace (see Figure 7), Mount Qingcheng and the Dujiangyan Irrigation System, Site of Xanadu, Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion, Temple of Heaven, Mogao Caves, Ancient City of Ping Yao, Peking Man Site, Capital Cities and Tombs of the Ancient Koguryo Kingdom, Imperial Tombs of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Mountain Resort and its Outlying Temples, Yin Xu, Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing Dynasties in Beijing and Shenyang, Classical Gardens of Suzhou, Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, Dazu Rock Carvings, Longmen Grottoes, Yungang Grottoes, and Lushan National Park.



Legend

- Meeting 13 to 18 indicators; ○ Meeting 7 to 12 indicators;
- Meeting 0 to 6 indicators.

Figure 4 Locations of Chinese World Heritage properties from 1987 to 2018. (With reference to UNESCO website: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/cn>)

The analysed UNESCO documents do not indicate a high degree of community participation practices in any of these properties, namely meeting 19 to 23 indicators. Still, relatively high community participation is reported within seven properties including Mount Wutai, Honghe Hani Rice Terraces, Kulangsu and Lijiang Old Town. The role of local residents has been recognised in the decision-making process for collaborative heritage maintenance and management. Residents have formed part of the management committees enacting regulations to ensure public benefits in Kulangsu and Mount Wutai. Residents, for example from Honghe Hani Rice Terraces, Lijiang and the Grand Canal, have platforms to be informed about heritage projects and to build competence in participating in heritage management and related economic activities. Furthermore, these seven heritage properties have been utilised in local daily lives to continue community traditional lifestyles.

For the 10 properties meeting 7 to 12 indicators, the local institutions have taken some actions to engage local residents and respect their ideas, but the degree of public participation is relatively low and more efforts are urgently needed. The residents of these properties have been involved and consulted in the decision-making for achieving broad-community goals and protecting heritage attributes. For example in Fujian Tulou, the local government has taken actions to provide the necessary infrastructure and facilities to improve residents' living conditions. Residents are encouraged to stay within the property to protect traditional lifestyles, heritage authenticity and integrity. Within these properties, educational activities have been organised to publicise heritage significance and gain communities' professional skills. Even so, residents do not have channels to access management information and benefit-sharing processes. Besides this, they

often lack sufficient resources to challenge government decisions deviating from their interests, for example in the Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace as well as Xidi and Hongcun.

More than half of the properties (19 out of 36) have got community participation involved in World Heritage management to only a minimal degree, meeting up to six indicators. The documents showcase some efforts to involve residents in the decision-making process, but they lack the educational opportunities related to gaining skills of heritage management and business activities. Besides this, residents are hardly empowered and have insufficient platforms to negotiate with governments and other social actors. Community needs and local social issues are also not well addressed. Local governmental agencies and their heritage technical staff play an exclusive role in the protection and management processes without local residents sufficiently involved.

Interestingly, for the World Heritage properties conducting relatively high community participation, they are continuously used in local residents' daily life. For example, local farmers in Honghe are cultivating on rice terraces while religious communities are still living and practising traditional activities in Mount Wutai. However, for these heritage properties which have changed from their original functions to museums or archaeological sites, their public participatory activities have not been well conducted, such as the Dazu Rock Carvings, Longmen Grottoes and Yin Xu. Therefore, it could be difficult to facilitate high community participation in decision-making processes within the properties where the core community is hard to be identified and there are not daily living activities. Then, based on the assessment criteria and indicators, we further discussed specific Chinese practices in community



participation facilitation, and a summary of the findings is presented in the following sections.





*Figure 5 Cultural Landscape of Honghe Hani Rice Terraces (Author: Li Kun, [whc.unesco.org/en/documents/123256](http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/123256))*



*Figure 6 Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (Author: Ko Hon Chiu Vincent, [whc.unesco.org/en/documents/126092](http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/126092))*



*Figure 7 Summer Palace, an Imperial Garden in Beijing (Author: Juan Frias-Velatti, [whc.unesco.org/en/documents/113058](http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/113058))*

### *Participation in decision-making processes for cultural heritage management*

The decision-making of cultural heritage management needs to not only include governmental agencies, experts and businesses but also NGOs and (the representatives of) residents, intending to achieve community goals (Kyriakidis & Anagnostopoulos, 2015; Lekakis, 2013). After applying the 11 assessment indicators of criterion 1, the number of properties meeting each indicator is as shown in Figure 8. The national state has established local state institutions for World Heritage management, aiming to facilitate the participation of local residents in the management process. Management power is decentralised from the central government to these local institutes, who appear to be identifying community-based goals and building collaborative partnerships. However, insufficient attention has been paid to several aspects, including engaging local communities with decision-making

bodies and the prioritisation of objectives, public accesses to management information and the evaluation of current partnerships.

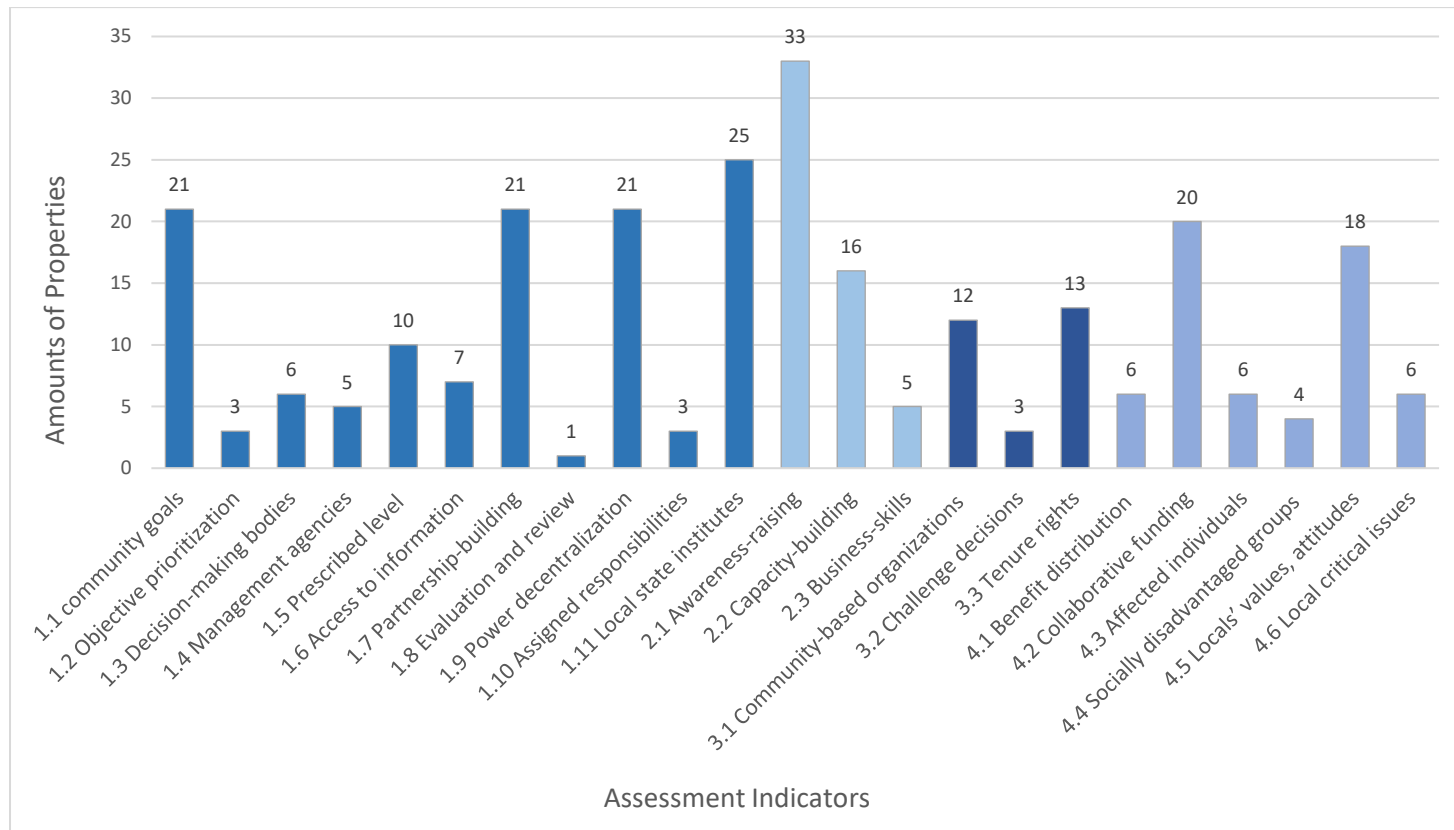


Figure 8 Assessed results in response to the 23 assessment indicators

Contents of these documents indicate that community participation has taken place in Chinese World Heritage. But still, residents have insufficient platforms and resources to express their ideas and interests. Broad-based community goals (indicator 1.1) have been explicitly set for 21 properties as a method to improve local living environments and protect the *OUV* of World Heritage. For the indicator of objectives prioritization in indicator 1.2, the “public-interest-first” objective is approved in a few official management documents (SACH, 2014). For example, residents from Kulangsu developed a convention to establish protection objectives regarding heritage values, community awareness, responsibilities and rights. Besides this, the residents of the Historical Centre of Macao got involved in framing local planning directions and objectives. However, the inclusion of residents in management bodies (indicator 1.3) has been only approved in the management schemes of six properties, such as in Lijiang and Kaiping. And only five properties emphasised the requirements of community presentation in decision-making processes (indicator 1.4). To implement community-coordination strategies, at the prescribed level (indicator 1.5), multiple governance-level provisions were formulated, such as the customary laws of the Hani people, the Cultural Heritage Protection Law of Macao and related Guangdong provincial regulations for Kaiping Diaolou. Concerning various channels used for public communication (indicator 1.6), the establishments of websites, library datasets, letters, and emails were approved in the management documents of 7 properties for collecting community ideas and publicising management measures, such as in Peking Man Site and Mogao Caves.

Partnership-building has been well facilitated while the effectiveness of partnerships has not been assessed in the management process, as

addressed in these documents. For indicator 1.7, many heritage projects, for example in the Great Wall and the Grand Canal, have carried out effective public participation. And the partnership-building spanned the collaboration of governmental agencies, businesses and other social actors such as publicity and educational institutions, and especially, the engagement of local residents. In the Silk Roads, sufficient attention was paid to improving the perception and participation of local residents in substantial conservation work while enhancing the collaborations with different stakeholders. This collaborative partnership has also been built in Lijiang to implement management plans and supervise site monitoring of daily maintenance (UNESCO, 2008). However, there is little attention paid to the effectiveness of current management partnerships and participatory activities (indicator 1.8). Only in Mount Wutai was it pointed out that the heritage administration officers should facilitate the collaboration with local temple workers apart from national protection and maintenance work (ICOMOS, 2009).

As Fan (2014) and Li et al. (2020) have noted, Chinese cultural heritage management is a government-led process blended with public consultation. For indicator 1.9, the decentralisation of management power to locals has been facilitated in most properties. The central government enables the State Administration of Cultural Heritage of China (Hereafter: SACH) to establish local state institutions. These local institutions are committed to carrying out daily maintenance, implementing management schemes and especially, building partnerships (indicator 1.11, n=25). For instance, the local community of the Grand Canal was involved in the nomination process. Besides this, the management committee of Wudang has done a good job in mobilising residents and the religious community, with Taoists as the



principal protectors. For indicator 1.10, only the management institutions of the properties in Wudang, Honghe, and Zuojiang assigned management and protection responsibilities to various stakeholder groups. In Zuojiang, volunteers selected from villagers were willing and then committed to watching over the rock art under local leaders' supervision (ICOMOS, 2016).

### *Competence of participants to participate in the cultural heritage management process*

Competence of participants is a key factor in facilitating effective community participation in cultural heritage management and protection processes (Wijesuriya et al., 2017). The management process needs to provide local residents with the opportunities to be trained as information providers, management partners and business managers (Dhliwayo et al., 2009; Yung et al., 2014). In Chinese World Heritage management, various platforms were used to publicise and communicate heritage information with the public but training activities were mainly provided to official staff, not to local residents. Business skill-building is still weak but has started to improve among residents, as tourism is a significant driver in urban economic growth. The quantitative result of the 3 indicators of criterion 2 is as shown in Figure 8.

For indicator 2.1, almost all the properties (n=33 out of 36) have taken actions to publicise heritage projects, boosting citizens' understanding of World Heritage and promoting the compliance with supranational conventions and relevant national provisions. For example, the government of Honghe employed both domestic and overseas media to communicate about the Hani Terraces culture, protection progress, and the latest technologies. The Macao Government launched a "Macao Cultural Heritage Promotion Project" to educate citizens through exhibitions, seminars, games,

and competitions (SACH & Macao SAR of PRC, 2005). Raising citizens' awareness was listed as one of the objectives in this project, reflecting the maturity of the community and their willingness to participate.

Regarding capacity-building initiatives (indicator 2.2), most of the documents report that training programmes were mainly organised for official staff, including site directors, managers, and professionals. For example, staff in the local agencies of Lushan National Park, Mogao Caves, and the Site of Xanadu have had the opportunity to participate in professional workshops, lectures, and seminars. International heritage organisations such as UNESCO and ICCROM supplied and exchanged the information for training, as did the national heritage management circle. Less than half of the managing institutions (n=16) provide training opportunities to local residents. The Lijiang institution handed out maintenance manuals for house owners, helping them to undertake daily protection and repair work. In Kaiping and the Potala Palace, local craftsmen were trained to continue traditional techniques of buildings. Capacity-building activities for residents have been also added to the execution agendas of several management plans to be implemented in the future, such as at Mount Wutai and the Grand Canal.

In addition to management and protection capacities, residents also need the ability to participate in local economic activities such as heritage tourism and local production (Srijuntrapun et al., 2017). For indicator 2.3, however, only five local administrative institutions have conducted related activities to promote residents' entrepreneurial and business skills. For example, in the Hani Rice Terraces, local governments agreed on contracts with farmers and farmers' organisations for collaboration in production, processing, and

circulation of agricultural products, jointly sharing profits and undertaking risks. Farmers have improved their knowledge of industrial management in order to boost agriculture development. In Zuojiang, the farming system was adapted, combining land utilisation and cultivation with modern technologies, was established for the farmers.

*Right to social justice and confidence of participants in the cultural heritage management process*

The right of participants to social justice in cultural heritage management means that local communities have legal mechanisms to approve or challenge decisions made by governmental agencies (Hammami, 2016; Lausche, 2011). This contributes to an inclusive and open process in which local communities can appeal government decisions to incorporate their interests in these decisions (Simakole et al., 2018). World Heritage management in China has taken actions to ensure residents' rights, confidence, access to information and social justice, and the quantitatively assessed results of criterion 3 are presented in Figure 8.

Regarding indicator 3.1, community-based organisations have emerged to support public participation in the management processes of 12 properties. The management institution in Wudang coordinated with the Taoist Association in monitoring the law enforcement situation, commercial activities and heritage structures. The Buddhist Association of Mount Wutai played a significant role in the negotiations between administrative agencies, experts and residents. Several NGOs, such as the Friendship Association for Cultural Relics, provided strong support to the protection and rehabilitation measures for the Ancient City of Pingyao. In Lijiang, local community organisations together with the chamber of commerce were committed to monitoring both conservation progress and commercial activities.

Furthermore, community organisations and voluntary groups have also been established in several properties to solicit public opinion, collect data and conduct academic research, such as in Kulangsu, Kaiping Diaolou and Dengfeng.

For the legal recourse used for appealing ideas and to meet other needs in indicator 3.2, citizens need channels for approving or challenging government decisions, but only three properties have addressed them. A self-supporting public organisation called Yuanyang County Hani Rice Terraces Culture Preservation Institute has been established in the Hani Rice Terraces for government procurement, social donation and compensable services, through which farmers addressed their real interests and expectations. The residents of Kulangsu formed an organisation to formulate heritage protection and management conventions. In addition, communication channels, such as letter, fax, email, and website, were proposed for the Grand Canal, encouraging the public to contribute their suggestions and feedbacks.

In terms of indicator 3.3, according to related national laws, most of these properties (n=28 out of 36) are completely or partly state-owned. Local individuals have the private or collective ownership of 13 properties, including Xidi and Hongcun, Kaiping Diaolou, Kulangsu, and the Old Town of Lijiang. The state predominantly holds the right of the ownership of World Heritage properties. Therefore, in general, local Chinese residents lack resources to protect their rights, express interests and challenge government decisions.

### *Empowerment and equity in the cultural heritage management process*

Community values are central to current heritage management approaches and community empowerment contributes to open public participation and well-accepted outcomes among the public (Poulios, 2014). It includes: (1) economic empowerment to increase economic gains to residents; (2) psychological empowerment to recognise resident values and their traditional knowledge; (3) social empowerment to enhance social benefits and stability; (4) political empowerment to ensure all affected communities have rights and equity in the management process (Regina, 2002; Simakole et al., 2018). The assessed results in Figure 8 show that Chinese World Heritage management seeks to protect social equity and empower residents. Although it is hard to enable local residents to fully undertake the management practices of heritage projects, some interesting actions of community empowerment are detailed below.

Regarding indicator 4.1, the facilitation of equitable benefit distribution, only six property institutions have taken actions intending to increase local residents' income. The residents of Wudang Mountain and the Potala Palace have received payment of subsidies because of their supportive work of daily heritage maintenance. A business model "company + farmer" has been established in the Hani Rice Terraces to subsidise residents for farming red rice through traditional methods. And direct financial profits from agricultural production in related enterprises were shared with residents (SACH, 2015). Fair profit distribution mechanisms were also proposed in Kaiping Diaolou, Mount Wutai and the Silk Roads, encouraging an appropriate share of tourism revenues and creating more job opportunities for local residents as financial incentives. For the funding framework of

indicator 4.2, the main financial sources were mainly national, provincial, and local authority budgets allocated by the state to on-site management institutions. In addition, some economic support from international sponsors such as UNESCO and the World Bank is also noted, but above all the revenue of entry fees is key to supplement protection and management expenses. Twenty management institutions have involved residents and social organisations in a collaborative funding framework. In terms of the funding from social organisations, the Hong Kong Chinese Culture Fund donated 5 million USD to the Imperial Palaces of the Ming and Qing dynasties.

In indicator 4.3, the result presents that six properties have developed integrated management provisions and protective regulations into a comprehensive system to institutionalise the cooperation between all concerned stakeholder groups. In Mount Wutai, the strategy of multi-stakeholder partnerships was formulated to encourage various stakeholders to participate in the management process (SACH, 2009). In the Hani Rice Terraces, the local government, village committees, villagers' associations, and farmers were requested to sign documents assigning responsibility. The stakeholders of the West Lake Landscape included the governments at different levels, tourist departments, service enterprises, local residents, and other social entities. Some effort has been put into facilitating the participation of socially disadvantaged people in four properties (indicator 4.4), but there are no statements on including them in management bodies. The Chinese Communist Youth League and the Women's Federation of Honghe Prefecture participated in programming the management measures, encouraging more young people back to the heritage site.

For the assessment of community value in indicator 4.5, some management processes (n=18) recognise the significance of the local communities who use the heritage properties through their traditional ways of daily practices and rituals. For instance, religious activities of Taoists are vital for keeping the temples in the Wudang Mountains as living heritage, underpinning long-standing traditional social and religious structures. The residents in Pingyao and Lijiang have been encouraged to live and work in the old towns, maintaining the layout of streets and lanes, water systems and other morphological features. Besides, the canal community's everyday activities and their living environments have been considered inseparable parts of the Grand Canal's values. Regarding indicator 4.6, the management processes of six properties such as Lijiang, Kulangsu and the Wudang Mountains demonstrate the importance of identification and assessment of local critical social issues. The issues include local economic activities such as tourism development, infrastructure improvement and public services. These heritage properties are used and managed as a dynamic resource in promoting daily socio-economic activities and increasing residents' income (SACH, 2017). By doing so, residents can sustain a strong association with local heritage, such as in Lijiang and the West Lake Cultural Landscape.

## Conclusion

This chapter developed a targeted assessment framework through which to further understand and assess community participation within the management practices of the 36 Chinese cultural heritage inscribed on the UNESCO WHL from 1987 to 2018. Based on the conceptualisation of community participation from supranational and national policies, an assessment framework was synthesised from a literature review on various heritage-related frameworks. This assessment framework further addressed

both international and local/national (Chinese) issues related to community participation in cultural heritage management, which contributes to sustainable relations between governments and residents. It identified 23 indicators under four main criteria: 1) participation in decision-making; 2) the competence of participants; 3) the right to justice and confidence of participants; and 4) empowerment and equity in cultural heritage management.

Through the application of the assessment framework to UNESCO documents, the results provide an overview of Chinese practices in facilitating community participation in World Heritage management. Generally, Chinese World Heritage management relies on a government-led process wherein community participation is happening to a minimal degree. Most properties have insufficient involvement of residents in decision-making, and the focus of management is placed more on the presentation of heritage materiality than the improvement of community traditional life. Even within these constraints, several properties have advanced community-based procedures and conducted relatively high levels of community participation, such as Honghe Hani Rice Terraces, Mount Wutai, Kulangsu and the Old Town of Lijiang. Local residents shared responsibilities with administrative agencies and also reaped benefits from these heritage-based conservation processes.

Chinese governments play a dominant and centralised role in the management process of World Heritage, and they have put efforts into building collaborative funding and benefit-sharing frameworks. Besides this, local state institutions, including neighbourhood RCs and some specialised organisations, have been established for the management of each property,

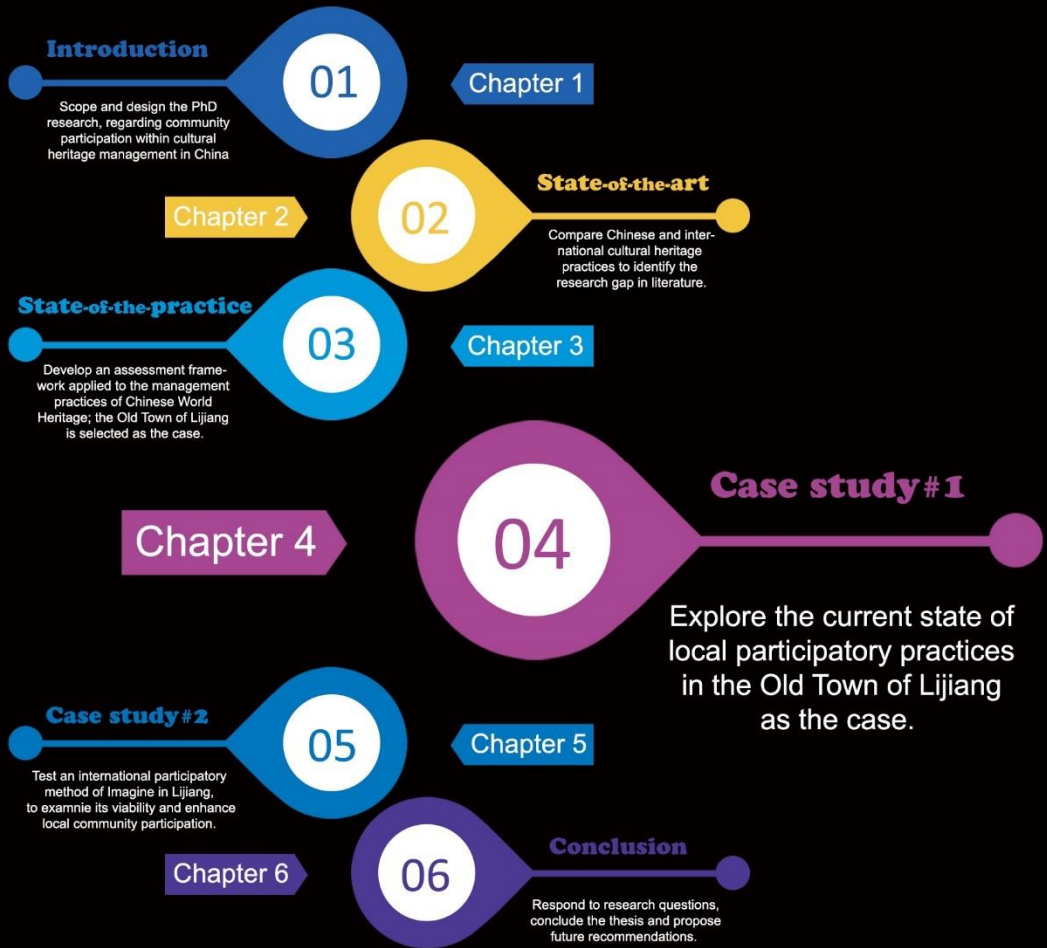


under the supervision and approval of SACH. These local institutions are committed to conducting heritage monitoring and maintenance and solving daily community issues. They have done a good job of identifying community goals and building collaborative partnerships. For example, in several properties such as Mount Wutai and the Hani Rice Terraces, residents have opportunities to have a voice and even to form the decision-making body. However, management partnerships have not been periodically reviewed or evaluated. And there are few authorised conventions for the requirement of community presentation and assigning of responsibilities to residents. Although effectively publishing on heritage values and information, the training activities of management capacities and business skills, such as in Mogao Caves and Tusi Sites, have been mainly organised for officials and have not yet been arranged for local residents. Despite several community-based organisations being set up, in general, residents still lack resources to negotiate with different stakeholders and challenge any government decisions deviating from their interests. Positively, the management processes in some cases have endeavoured to identify local communities' traditions and daily routines, which are an inseparable part of heritage values, such as in the Old Town of Lijiang. To facilitate their empowerment further, concerned communities should be widely identified and local social issues explored, urgently.

In this chapter, the targeted assessment framework of community participation has been proven applicable in China, contributing to international cultural heritage studies. It covers both fields of cultural heritage management and sustainable urban development. This framework could be further expanded and tested in other regions, enable to adapt to various national and local contexts varying in geographical characteristics,

governance structures, heritage scope and potential to better help foster community participatory practices. During the assessment process, it was noted that, for some properties, documentations related to reporting the latest practices to the World Heritage Centre, such as Pingyao and Lushan were not accessible online. In extended research, it is necessary to explore current situations of community participation as it happens in situ and not only through self-reporting in official documents. Therefore, the Old Town of Lijiang, as one of the World Heritage properties conducting relatively high community participation in China, is then selected as the empirical case in the next two chapters of the PhD research. And in the following chapter, this assessment framework helped develop the interview guide applied to the fieldwork in Lijiang, to explore the effectiveness and current state of community participatory practices in China.







## Chapter IV STATE QUO IN LIJIANG

*Exploring community participation within cultural heritage management in urban China*

**This chapter is based on a journal article published with Habitat International:**

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Through the assessment of Chinese World Heritage management in the previous chapter, it is revealed that the Old Town of Lijiang has conducted various community participatory practices. Furthermore, the Old Town of Lijiang is a living heritage property of HUL facing the challenges of rapid urbanisation. Therefore, in this chapter, the Old Town of Lijiang is targeted as the case to explore the current state of community participation within cultural heritage management in China. Based on the assessment framework discussed in the preceding chapter, in-depth semi-structured interviews were developed and then carried out with both native and migrant residents as well as local public administrators during the fieldwork in Lijiang.

## Introduction

Today, the concept of heritage includes not only isolated artefacts and historic buildings but also larger-scale ensembles, districts and landscapes (Veldpaus, 2015). There is a growing awareness that urban socio-economic development activities have profound impacts on both heritage and its communities (Buckley et al., 2015). To better face the challenges of rapid urbanisation and modernisation, it is recommended that cultural heritage management is carried out through inclusive and dynamic community participation processes (Lewis, 2015; Yung et al., 2017). The UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape states the importance of engaging local communities in heritage discussions within broader urban settings, by developing more holistic approaches to capture and manage the change of urban development and heritage (Bandarin & Van Oers, 2012; Verdini et al., 2017). Heritage management is then requested to include different stakeholder groups in the decision-making processes, e.g. identification, programming and execution steps (Veldpaus, 2015). The stakeholder groups can be defined as communities who can contribute to decision-making processes and affect decisions for the protection and (re)use of heritage (Mısırlısoy & Günçe, 2016). As noted by Poullos (2014), stakeholders engaged in heritage management can be categorised into either a core or a broader community, based on their association with heritage. The core community is the local residents, related to those who have created, still using and/or safeguarding heritage, through their traditional knowledge and practices. The broader community is defined as a group of facilitators, including public administrators, experts, business people and real estate developers (Poullos, 2014). Therefore, in theory, heritage management is expected to be a community-based process, in

which the interests of the core community can be prioritised and the broader community can provide financial and administrative support (Court & Wijesuriya, 2015; Poullos, 2014).

Cultural heritage has been already understood as a resource for facilitating urban development, and some countries are placing the core focus of heritage management on enhancing socio-economic development (for example in Logan, 2018; Su, 2011, 2015; Wu, 2018). Although more opportunities for socio-economic development can come along with the process, challenges and threats have also been placed on cultural heritage management and urban conservation (Seyedashrafi et al., 2017). In China, the whole country is experiencing unprecedented urban (re)development, and the rapidly urbanising process has caused various social tensions to both cultural heritage and its communities, including over-commercialisation, enforced eviction and social inequality (Ng et al., 2016; Tan & Altrock, 2016; Wang & Aoki, 2019). Moreover, being based on state centralisation and market orientation, decision-making processes in China lack legal mechanisms to ensure public participation and benefits (Arkaraprasertkul, 2018; Fan, 2014). That can trigger conflicts between the state's and residents' interests, especially for the conflicts of ambitious economic targets (Logan, 2018; Wu, 2018). To mitigate social tensions in China, as Yung, Chan, and Xu (2014) and Fan (2014) have pointed out, sufficient and effective community participation can help balance different economic, social and cultural interests between citizens, entrepreneurs and local governments. Community participation can help enhance urban social sustainability (Yung et al., 2014), make integrated heritage conservation-planning (Verdini et al., 2017; Wang & Gu, 2020), and improve local livelihoods (Kou et al., 2018).



In China, community participation within cultural heritage management practices, generally, is government-led, in which the state has exclusive power and local residents lack competence and platforms so that the degree of participation is relatively low (Tan & Altroch, 2016; Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013). This chapter aims to explore community participation within the context of cultural heritage management in urban China. The Old Town of Lijiang was selected as the case, because it is currently under the pressure of rapid urbanisation, and its heritage management and protection practices have already involved residents (Su, 2015). During the fieldwork in Lijiang, in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out with both native and migrant residents, as well as, local public administrators. This chapter reveals the current state of participatory practices in the Old Town of Lijiang and, specifically, discusses the roles of local residents, elites and community-based organisations in the government-led decision-making process within cultural heritage management in rapid Chinese urbanisation.

## Community participation and Chinese characteristics in cultural heritage management

In China, community participation is considered to be a practical solution to mitigate social tensions between local governments, business people, experts and residents, as well as to balance heritage conservation and urban (re)development (Yung et al., 2014; Zhao et al., 2020). And effective community participation can contribute to well-organised heritage-led urban development (Zhao et al., 2020). The success of Chinese heritage projects often relies on effectively consulting or even involving with residents, to better include their interests in the government-led management processes (Fan, 2014; Li et al., 2020a). An inclusive participatory process can work for better cultural mapping integrated into

the local management scheme (Verdini et al., 2017). And also, the final scheme is then acceptable in communities to be implemented smoothly (Fan, 2014). Furthermore, the Central Government has established local state institutions such as Street Offices and neighbourhood Residents' Committees (Fan, 2014; Li et al., 2020a). These local state institutions are committed to managing neighbourhood administrative issues and facilitating grassroots activities related to heritage management practices (Verdini, 2015). However, the primary task of these local organisations is to execute governmental decisions rather than to be real representatives of residents (Fan, 2014; Verdini, 2015).

Within such a state-centralisation environment, heritage projects are easily undertaken through government-led processes (Fan, 2014; Li et al., 2020a; Verdini, 2015). Aligned with economic developers, the governments often play a dominant role in programming and finalizing schemes, and residents' tokenistic role in participation may create social unrest (Zhai & Ng, 2013). For example, although community concerns through public consultations were collected and then reported by local newspapers concerning the Enning Road project in Guangzhou, residents' interests were still being neglected in the government-finalised plan. And then, civil protests happened, which involved journalists, a local civic group and experts as well as house proprietors (Tan & Altrock, 2016). In the Drum Tower Muslim district in Xi'an, residential dialogues were organised between the government and residents. However, eventually, residents' concerns, such as the issues of housing removal and residential relocation, were not solved in the final scheme. Several civil resistance activities then took place for their community-based demands, with the help and support from a local mosque-based management committee (Zhai & Ng, 2013). Also, residents were

engaged in the negotiation process of the project of the old city centre of Nanjing but still, their interests were not included in the final scheme (Verdini, 2015). Within these cases, even though residential consultation activities were conducted with the public, the local governments would still like to implement a more market-oriented approach with residents' interests excluded, which can trigger civil protests fighting for social justice (Tan & Altrrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). These protest and resistance activities are from local civil society to challenge exclusive government-led decision-making processes deviating from public expectations (Morrison & Xian, 2016). And these cases have shown a tokenistic manner of community participation in Chinese cultural heritage management, wherein residents get involved in the government-led process but collected public interests and needs are still not included in the final scheme (Li et al., 2020a).

Government-led processes in China are often positioned simplistically with a bias to be along with the characteristics of exclusive, controversial and unorthodox (Verdini et al., 2017). In fact, government-led processes can also produce excellent outcomes in Chinese cultural heritage practices as long as residents' interests are effectively discussed and sufficiently included (Verdini 2015). For example, in the Wenhuali project in Yangzhou, experts consulted with residents to contribute their ideas, which were authorised and supported by the government (Fan, 2014). Also, the government of the Shuang Wan Cun in Suzhou initiated a heritage project, in which both decision-makers and residents were consulted to define local developmental contexts and map heritage attributes. Residents' needs were included in the final strategic plan and they felt satisfied with it (Verdini et al., 2017). In addition, it is noted that local elites and community-based organisations can play a key role in mediating with local governments to

include residents' interests within Chinese cultural heritage management (Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013). For example, local elites included planning experts and university students in the project of Enning Road while academic scholars, local architects, and planners in the old city centre of Nanjing, to help residents address their ideas to the local governments (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Verdini, 2015), and also like the mosque-based management committee as a community-based organisation in the project of the Drum Tower Muslim district (Zhai & Ng, 2013). Furthermore, as Morrison and Xian, (2016) have revealed, in Chinese cities, committees are usually formed to review and deliberate urban planning issues, and residents' representatives are part of the committee. Besides, local elites and community-based organisations are often appointed by the government to be residents' representatives because of their high reputation in vernacular cultural protection, public administration or business management (Shao, 2017; Su, 2011; Zhao et al., 2020).

These cultural heritage practices have demonstrated that Chinese civil society is empowered with limited power by the state (Verdini, 2015). In theory, civil society can play a fundamental role in counterbalancing the system of power with local governments by building horizontal alliances between citizens and heterogeneous community organisations (Chen & Qu, 2020; Verdini, 2015). Because Chinese civil society is not strong enough, local governments and political leaders have spaces for discretionary mandates through an exclusive decision-making process when implementing policies formulated by the national Central Government (Birney, 2014; Verdini, 2015; Morrison & Xian, 2016). Also, the strong willingness of different individuals and groups to be engaged is key to achieve inclusive participatory practices within such a government-centralised process, aiming to endeavour to get

their “agreement on how to change the existing status-quo” included in the final scheme (Verdini, 2015, pp 371). To promote the function of civil society for effective community participation, local elites (leading professionals) and community-based organisations (civil society organisations), therefore, need to play a role in supporting resident interests and public needs when participating in the decision-making negotiation process with governments, developers and other social actors, within cultural heritage management in urban China (Chen & Qu, 2020).

The main characteristic of community participation in the context of Chinese cultural heritage management is the co-existence of both top-down and bottom-up processes, wherein effective public participation is struggling but endeavouring to be created within a government-led environment (Li et al., 2020a). As long as residents’ interests are sufficiently discussed and then included in the decision-making processes, namely positioning residents on the role of consulting or involving rather than just informing, civil resistance could be effectively avoided and projects could achieve better outcomes (Fan, 2014).

## Methodology

### *Data collection during fieldwork*

The process of data collection was carried out during fieldwork between September to December 2019 in Lijiang, China. In the fieldwork, in-depth semi-structured interviews were organised with six local public administrators and twenty residents (ten natives and ten migrants). The six administrators were from four sectors affiliated to the Conservation and Management Bureau of the World Heritage Lijiang Old Town (hereafter: the Management Bureau, shijie wenhua yichan lijiang gucheng guanli baohu ju).

The Management Bureau is a place-specific governmental agency, established for the direct protection and management work of the old town (Su, 2010). The sectors included the Department of Protection and Construction (baohu jianshe ke, one interviewee), the Department of Market Operation and Management (shichang jingying zhunru guanli ke, one interviewee), the Centre of Heritage Monitoring (yichan jiance zhongxin, two interviewees) and the Lijiang Old Town Management Co., Ltd (gucheng guanli gongsi, two interviewees). Their daily work covered not only the protection of traditional dwellings and historic public buildings but also different aspects of local community initiatives, heritage environment monitoring and socio-economic development. These six administrators were familiar with local community affairs and able to contribute ideas to the current state of public participatory practices from various views.

Concerning the selection of interviewed residents, two methods were applied. One was based on recommendations from the administrators, proposing some well-known residents who were active in local heritage activities and grass-roots community initiatives. These recommended people included the leaders of neighbourhood community committees, museum managers, business owners and several elders. The other method was that the fieldwork investigators went to community centres and private residential/business houses to meet residents at random, including the owners of guesthouses, shops, bars and restaurants as well as other residents living or working within the old town. Besides this, these selected residents, including both natives and migrants, needed to have lived in the old town for over a year, knowing local conditions well in both community activities and socio-economic development. The selected native residents, also called old Lijangers (lao lijiang ren), were residents either born or raised

in the old town, who were assumed to have a strong association to vernacular cultural identity and sense of belonging. The selected migrant residents were referred to people who had moved to Lijiang, for making a living, also called by the natives as new Lijiangers (xin lijiang ren). Tourists were not included as this chapter was not focused on their experiences or expectations.

The method of the semi-structured interview included open-ended questions, primarily to give interviewees enough space to articulate ideas and answers, based on their own experiences. The interview guide, including twenty open-ended questions, was based on a community participation assessment framework for cultural heritage management, developed in the previous chapter by (Li et al., 2020b). This assessment framework includes systematic criteria and indicators to assess the depth and breadth of community participatory practices. It has been applied to assess Chinese World Heritage, and the Old Town of Lijiang was then identified as a suitable case to explore public participatory practices in the Chinese contexts of cultural heritage management. Also, the concept of community participation has broadened to cover various aspects related to local communities' engagement as well as their roles, competence and empowerment (Li et al., 2020b). Therefore, the interview guide, as shown in appendix B, included four main aspects: community participation in decision-making (nine questions); the competence of participants (three questions); the right to social justice and confidence of participants (three questions); and community empowerment and equity (five questions). These selected residents were interviewed question by question, individually, to ensure they can express their true feelings and ideas. Each interview took around 20 minutes. Through semi-structured interviews, we

targeted the contextual nuance and consistency of the responses from different stakeholder groups and individuals, maximising response validity and exploration (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002; Maher et al., 2018). Responses from different groups can enhance data validity, as this was also a confirmation process of the collected information. Besides this, various ideas and attitudes of respondents can gain exploration in the research fieldwork.

### *Post-coding of interview transcripts*

Post-coding procedures were employed for the formal qualitative analysis of the contents of the interview transcripts. By applying these procedures, we attempted to extract subtle and extensive information from the interview transcripts, and then use the extracted information in the qualitative analysis. Relying on the open-ended questions, a post-coding system was defined, to benefit from the richness of responses from the different stakeholder groups and individuals and their responses. Within the post-coding system, three levels of codes were developed, which are manifest coding, latent coding and global coding items (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002).

Manifest coding items were applied to code direct responses. For example, in the question that identifying the roles of local community-based organisations, respondents were asked to rank their roles from 1) informing about government decisions, 2) supporting government work and 3) protecting residents' benefits. Through the application of the manifest coding items, we can directly get the information of various stakeholders' attitudes and also general local participatory practices. Further, the interview questions requested respondents not only to answer yes or no directly but also to address their reasons. Latent coding items were then

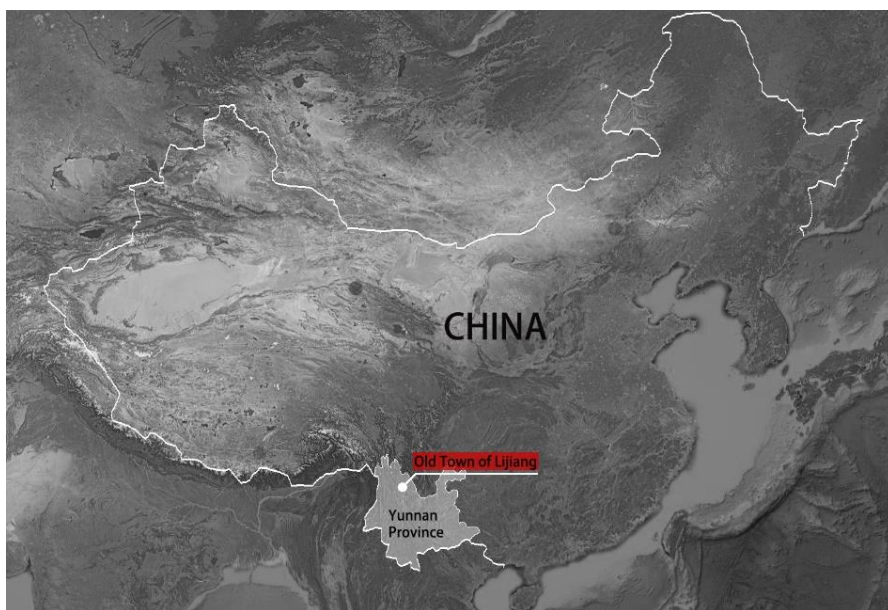


used to elicit the characteristics of the responses to expressing respondents' ideas and perceptions, elaborating the manifest coding items. For example, in the question "do residents have platforms to contribute their ideas or challenge government decision?", respondents needed to answer yes/no (manifest coding items), as well as what the platforms are and if they work well based on their experiences (latent coding items). Last, global coding was used to support the judgement process in which we, as coders, discussed the traits and styles from respondents' answers. This judgement processes led an analysis of local community participatory practices, as well as, to compare the perceptions and attitudes of administrators, native and migrant residents towards heritage practices. By comparing their perceptions and attitudes, this analysis identified and discussed gaps and consistency between the local government and residents.

In the result section, we purely presented local responses and ideas collected from the fieldwork in Lijiang' old town, and the results, in principle, are solely reflective of how these interviewees considered local community participatory practices. Further on in the discussion section, related existing literature was also discussed together with the fieldwork outcomes, would like to ascertain an overview of Chinese community participation and contribute to urban literature more markedly. Especially, the model of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (Li et al., 2020a) and the concept of the Ballarat Imagine project from Australia (Buckley et al., 2015) were brought into the discussion section, helping further demonstrate the current state of participatory practices in the context of Chinese cultural heritage management and recommend future actions.

## Background of community participation in the Old Town of Lijiang

The Old Town of Lijiang was built 800 years ago and is located in northwest Yunnan province in the southwest of China (see Figure 9). It was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1997, under the selection criteria (ii), (iv) and (v). Its Outstanding Universal Value was defined as a “harmonious living environment between human and nature as well as human wisdom to use the land. The Old Town of Lijiang comprises Dayan Old Town (including the Black Dragon Pond), Baisha and Shuhe housing clusters (UNESCO 1997). While a World Heritage property, the Old Town of Lijiang is also a place where residents continue practising daily socio-economic activities. This is significant as residents’ traditional activities and daily needs are of importance when developing heritage management schemes (Shao, 2017; Su, 2015).



*Figure 9 Location of the Old Town of Lijiang in China (Adapted from Fig. 1 in Su (2010))*

As one of the most popular tourist destinations in China, the City of Lijiang is mainly populated by a group of ethnic minority people Naxi, which was 20% of the local population in 2010, and some other minorities such as Tibetan, Yi, Lisu and Pumi (The Government of Lijiang, 2010; Zhu, 2018). Since the World Heritage inscription in 1997, along with the local booming tourism market, “tens of thousands of domestic migrants” have moved to Lijiang to run businesses, such as restaurants and guesthouses, for new business opportunities and also a better quality of life (Su et al., 2020, pp 6). Han Chinese was then 40% of the local population in 2010 (The Government of Lijiang, 2010; Zhu, 2018), and these migrants are mainly from some China’s megacities including Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen (Su et al., 2020). As Shao (2017) stated, in 2011, only around 32.6% of the local population was native residents but 67.4% was migrant business people, who were living within the Dayan Old Town. And currently, migrant residents make up a larger proportion of the population than natives within the old town, so local population replacement has then become a public concerned issue (Shao, 2017). In 2018, 1.2 million international and 45.2 million domestic tourists travelled to Lijiang and the overall revenue of the local tourism industry reached 99.8 billion Chinese yuan (around 14.4 billion US dollars) (Lijiang Bureau of Statistics, 2019), while there were only 45,930 international and 1.1 million domestic tourists in 1996 (Zhu, 2018). The local tourism industry and migrant (business) people’s needs are pivotal to be part of the working agendas of the old town management and development (Shao, 2017). Therefore, the involvement of local governmental agencies, as well as both native and migrant residents in the decision-making and benefit-sharing processes of heritage protection, has been embraced in Lijiang’s urban conservation plans (Shao, 2017).

In 2003, the local government of Lijiang commissioned an urban planning research team from Tongji University in Shanghai to complete a conservation plan for the old town. This conservation plan highlighted the importance of community participation as “positive protection through community participation and the active involvement from tourists and migrant business people” (Su, 2010, pp166). However, community participation was not carried out with residents when making the 2003 conservation plan (Su, 2010). Subsequently, an updated plan, Conservation Plan of World Heritage Site: Lijiang Old Town was completed in 2013. This updated plan states the management mechanism comprises multi-level governance. It includes the World Heritage committee, national and provincial institutions, the Management Bureau as well as residents’ participation and supervision.

Heritage management practices in Lijiang, at the local level, mainly rely on the Management Bureau, also with support from neighbourhood residents’ committees and several other community-based organisations like the association of guesthouses (Su, 2010). They take efforts on both neighbourhood administration and heritage management within their daily work (Shao, 2017). Given Lijiang is a living World Heritage property, the Management Bureau, therefore, has set the goal of community improvement into the working agendas of local heritage management, as a project director of local heritage dwellings lucidly enunciated,

“Over 90% of Lijiang’s heritage-designated dwellings are privately-owned. Local heritage and its protection, therefore, need to contribute to residents’ daily requirements. Involving residents in decision-making can enhance their sense of

ownership and help them comply with institutional regulations. We have a series of governmental meetings called *tingzhenghui* at the Management Bureau and community meetings called *kentanhui* in the Residents' Committees, in which residents can express their ideas and suggestions towards local heritage practices."

Therefore, in Lijiang, various activities related to the facilitation of community participation have been conducted but the demonstration of their effectiveness is still limited. In the following sections, the data collected from fieldwork show the current state of Lijiang's community participation and residents' attitudes and ideas towards their participation in local heritage management practices.

## Local responses to participatory practices in the Old Town of Lijiang

### *Community participation in decision-making*

Community and governmental meetings are regarded as platforms that facilitate residents' participation in the decision-making of Lijiang's heritage management. In the process, at the neighbourhood level, residents are mobilised in community meetings – *kentanhui* to discuss their interests and suggestions towards local heritage practices and social issues. Then, when new institutional regulations need to be approved, such as the collection of the old town maintenance fee and the approval of the list of permitted business, a governmental meeting – *tingzhenghui* with residents is organised in the Management Bureau (as Figure 10 shows). This meeting is organised with a wide range of stakeholders, as an administrator from the Management Bureau said, "we invite decision-makers, RCs, experts as well

as the representatives of both native and migrant residents to attend our *tingzhenghui*". Besides, a board member of a neighbourhood RC confirmed this and stated, "residents from our neighbourhood can join our *kentanhui* directly, and then we pass on their ideas to the Management Bureau. Besides this, their representatives also can bring residents' needs to *tingzhenghui*."



*Figure 10 A tingzhenghui to approve the list of local permitted business*

*The image accessed on 23rd February 2020 from  
[https://www.sohu.com/a/228300289\\_704998](https://www.sohu.com/a/228300289_704998)*

The representatives of both native and migrant residents are appointed by the state from local elites, who either have a high reputation in vernacular culture protection or run a big business. "When conducting management practices, we cannot listen to or fully follow the ideas of a person who either just moved to Lijiang or knows less about vernacular Naxi culture", an administrator explained. Furthermore, a native resident who is working for the neighbourhood administration pointed out, "once appointed as a

representative, the person can play a role in approving local social affairs for at least three years". It is hard for ordinary people to participate in governmental meetings directly while the same groups of people will attend the meetings for quite a while (at least three years).

During interviews, all native residents addressed the necessity and willingness to be engaged in heritage management together with local administrators. Because they are the bearers of vernacular culture and their participation can contribute ideas to the protection of heritage values and attributes. They expect that the government can initiate and lead the management processes of local heritage projects, with their interests and needs included as well. However, over half of the interviewed native residents do not feel positive about current community participatory practices, due to their insufficient engagement. They said,

"It is hard to achieve community participation. Although representatives are invited to attend governmental meetings, that is only a small amount of people. These representatives do not collect ideas from the public, and their interests are in line with the government" (Native 1).

"We need to have a say as heritage is part of our daily life, and the main part of the old town is our houses. We know better local situations than the administrators who only work in front of a computer every day" (Native 2).

"When we are invited to community meetings, decisions have been made from higher-level governments," a native resident expressed his disappointment. Furthermore, in governmental meetings, several minor revisions of policies and regulations can only be made when experts support

residents' suggestions, but a major revision is rare to occur. In *tingzhenghui*, approving the government's decisions is the priority for residents' representatives, especially when new policies are about to be implemented. They can only propose some very tiny changes", as an RC member addressed. This is also reflected in public projects such as plaza and museum construction. A project director from the Old Town Management Co., Ltd. described the process as, "we normally develop schemes of public projects with experts and decision-makers but do not consult with the public. Even so, what we do can improve local living environments and increase residents' income so they will definitely support our projects". The Old Town Management Co., Ltd is a fully-affiliated corporation of the Management Bureau. Its two main functions, as (Su, 2010) has noted, include "managing the economic issues of urban conservation and exclusively running the ancient town as a tourist product (pp. 169)", which are tourism-oriented rather than engage or favour town residents.

In contrast, over half of the interviewed migrants did not know they had representatives engaged in governmental meetings so they concluded that community engagement was not implemented yet. Furthermore, three (out of ten) interviewed migrants showed the unwillingness to foster community participatory practices. From their perspectives, the implementation of community participation was not easy in operation and they only concerned their own business. They addressed,

"Most of the residents currently living within the old town are migrants and they may only stay temporarily. Migrants are from different cultural backgrounds and the ideas they may



propose are only self-serving to the promotion of their business” (Migrant 1).

“Governmental meetings are mainly organised for informing new policies, not for collecting our ideas. Especially for us as migrants, this form of participation is symbolic. Therefore, we “trust” our government and I do not want to be involved” (Migrant 2).

Therefore, in Lijiang, the local government has created platforms to engage residents in the decision-making of the old town management. Representatives of both natives and migrants can attend governmental meetings together with decision-makers and experts. However, residents are not satisfied with their current participation in the decision-making processes. From their views, the representatives are in line with the government’s expectations and focus on enlarging their own business, instead of collecting the public’s real interests.

### *The competence of participants*

Awareness-raising and capacity-building are essential to facilitate community participatory practices within cultural heritage management (Li et al., 2020a; Wijesuriya et al., 2017). Regarding local awareness-raising efforts, several series of events have been initiated in the Old Town of Lijiang. A board member of a neighbourhood RC introduced,

“We have cultural activities called hemeidayan for celebrating traditional festivals, such as the Spring Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and Lantern Festival. Besides, some state-owned houses are being used for exhibiting vernacular cultures,

including traditional paper-making, silversmithing and Dongba characters of Naxi people. Furthermore, lectures are organised monthly at Xueshan College to educate residents on the importance of heritage protection, Naxi traditional conventions and tourism management.”

Native residents considered these cultural activities can naturally be part of their daily life while the attitudes of migrants were shown more passively. All the interviewed natives were familiar with these awareness-raising activities and showed their willingness to be involved, saying, “we are invited to volunteer to prepare traditional cuisine and cultural rituals together with tourists (see Figure 11)”, and “I like participating in these activities to celebrate festivals, as this makes me feel proud of being a member of Naxi people”. However, four migrants (out of ten) addressed they did not know these activities. Two migrants showed the unwillingness to participate, “I am very busy with my business so I do not have time to participate”, and “we are requested to be present in these activities and that is a waste of my time”.



*Figure 11 Naxi people making traditional moon cakes with tourists in the Mid-Autumn Festival*

*The image accessed on 23rd February 2020 from <http://www.ljgc517.com/gcdtv2/2277.htm>*

The Management Bureau has organised various activities related to local heritage protection and entrepreneurial skills. On the World and Chinese Heritage Day, several departments of the Management Bureau organise annual consultation meetings with residents about the norms of housing renovation, knowledge of fire-prevention security and business management (see Figure 12). The director of the local heritage centre interpreted, “during the consultation meetings, maintenance manuals demonstrating the characteristics of Lijiang traditional dwellings are also handed out to residents”. Besides, public lectures have been organised to improve entrepreneurial skills among residents. “We launch these activities to educate residents about their business management, focusing on applying for business permits, avoiding the homogenization of local business and obtaining a bank loan”, as the director of the business department said.

Residents are encouraged to start a new business, related to vernacular culture and distinguish their own business from others’.



*Figure 12 The consultation meeting on the 2019 World Heritage Day in Lijiang*

*The image accessed on 23rd February 2020 from  
<http://www.wenlvlijiang.com/ljwh/p/6947.html>*

Native residents have not engaged actively nor studied the maintenance manuals of housing renovation, although they know there are educational opportunities of local heritage protection. As a native resident said, “we have received maintenance manuals teaching us about our dwellings’ renovation, but I have never opened it yet”. Besides, another native pointed out, “most of our houses have been rented and switched to guesthouses, restaurants or bars, and business people should study the right ways of housing renovation, instead of us”. However, migrant residents are not willing to participate in these capacity-building activities. Over half of the interviewed migrants did not know or had yet participated in such activities. Their attitudes were “I do not have time” or “we can manage our own

business well". Actually, what business people truly concerned about was simplifying the process of applying and issuing a business permit. Several guesthouse owners addressed,

"The Management Bureau educates us about the knowledge of traditional housing renovation. Actually, they are not aiming at building our capacity to involve us in the old town protection but letting us obey the regulations of housing renovation."  
(Migrant 1).

"I can run my own business well without joining these activities. But, as we business people need to have a good relationship with the Management Bureau, we have to attend some of these activities to support the government's work." (Migrant 2).

Therefore, cultural activities, lectures and consultation meetings have been conducted in Lijiang, aiming to raise residents' awareness to value local heritage and build their capacity to protect the old town better but not to promote skills of public participation. However, native residents would like to participate in cultural activities for entertainment in festivals rather than educational lectures. And migrant residents are not interested in these collective activities but only concern their own business.

### *The right to social justice and confidence of participants*

To enhance social justice in heritage management, residents need legal mechanisms to ensure their interests are well-considered and/or they can challenge the government's decisions, which differ from their expectations (Lausche, 2011; Simakole et al., 2018). The legal mechanisms could be

supported by local community-based organisations, websites, (e-)mails and mobile phone apps (Li et al., 2020b). In Lijiang, neighbourhood RCs and the association of guesthouses are the two most important local community-based organisations, as both are eligible to attend governmental meetings. RCs are state organisations established for public administration at the neighbourhood level while the association of guesthouses is purely resident-based and consists of guesthouse owners. Their roles are of significance to enhance social justice and build residents' confidence in local heritage practices, bridging and levelling residents' and the governments' expectations.

However, the roles of these local community-based organisations did not appear to be fully working for the benefit of the residents' interests to enhance their confidence. When the interests between residents and the government differ, the priority of these organisations is to guide residents towards implementing the government's decisions. During interviews, a native resident addressed,

“The priority of residents' committees is supporting the government's work and implementing their decisions. They organise meetings with us, saying as public communication platforms. But the meetings are mainly used for educating us about fire security, housing renovation and economic activity norms, rather than collecting our ideas.”

Furthermore, regarding the role of the association of guesthouses, the owner of a guesthouse expressed,

“Although we have the association of guesthouses, they organise meetings with us more to inform the government's

latest decisions than to collect current living problems or protect our benefits.”

The meetings organised by the two community-based organisations are essentially designed to implement government decisions and community education. Residents’ rights cannot be protected through the participation of the community-based organisations so other platforms are needed. As an administrator from the Management Bureau interpreted, “they can also use mobile phone apps such as WeChat and Weibo to communicate with us directly. And through these apps, residents can access to the latest information of local heritage practices”. But these platforms do not always work well, as a resident pointed out, “when our problems are not in the consideration of the Management Bureau, we have to deliver letters to the mayor or complain through a 24-hour special hotline to the Management Bureau, to get our voice heard”. Therefore, community-based organisations in Lijiang are not playing a strong role in protecting residents’ rights and enhancing their confidence. Sometimes, residents have to find a way themselves, to include their needs and have a say. It is still hard to get residents’ rights and equality ensured in the management process which is predominantly led by the local government.

### *Community empowerment and equity*

Community empowerment in the contexts of heritage management includes 1) economic empowerment to increase residents’ income; 2) psychological empowerment to enhance community values and confidence; 3) social empowerment to ensure social benefits and stability; and 4) political empowerment to protect all affected communities’ equal rights (Li et al., 2020b; Regina, 2002; Simakole et al., 2018). Currently, in Lijiang, residents

can get paid from the Management Bureau when they contribute towards town protection work and public cultural activities. For example, local residents can be hired with priority in a town-run company to clean the environment and provide convenience to residents' living. Besides, "elderly people are invited to perform traditional dance activities for which they then get paid. We appropriate the maintenance fee collected from tourists as the financial source for public activities", as an administrator from the Management Bureau said.

Engaging communities is common practice in Lijiang, their roles and values have been recognised among administrators, involving not only native residents but also migrant residents. Residents' daily living requirements are ensured by the Management Bureau, to remain native populations and enhance their empowerment within local heritage management. An administrator addressed that, "we have embraced the protection of local lifestyle characteristics, especially intangible heritage and traditional conventions, into the government's working agendas". To keep native residents living within the town, infrastructures are continuously maintained and improved by the Management Bureau, including the conditions of pavement, drainage, transportation systems, water and electricity supply. Furthermore, "neighbourhood community facilities such as schools, markets, clinics, parks and banks are provided. And the government has taken efforts to strengthen public security, stabilise prices and improve infrastructures", as a guesthouse owner expressed.

The local government gives subsidies to the residents whose houses are authorised as dwelling museums. But the number of authorised museums is very limited even though people think their own houses are carrying greater



cultural and historical values. Therefore, to cope with the financial constraints, residents need to sublet their homes and then business people complete housing renovation. Gradually, native residents have left the town while migrants moved in for economic activities. Although efforts have been taken on recognising the significance of residents playing a role in local heritage management, residents are still not sufficiently empowered nor aware of its added value in carrying intangible heritage and traditional lifestyle characteristics. Most respondents, especially the migrant residents, have never been involved or even know who their representatives are. A board member of a neighbourhood RC confirmed that,

“The representatives of native and migrant residents are only elites who are famous in a local business or vernacular cultural protection, such as retired administrators, elderly residents and the chairman of the guesthouse association. Many of our neighbourhood residents think their participation in decision-making is symbolic and feel unsatisfied and angry.”

Delightedly, residents have shown their positive attitudes towards the government' actions practised to enhance community cultural identity and confidence as well as to solve local concerned living issues. “The Management Bureau invites us to organise cultural activities and it is also a learning process of intangible heritage and traditional rituals that tourists expect”, a shopkeeper said. But, he also addressed the worries that “with native residents moving away, it is a challenge for the Management Bureau to manage the old town as traditional living neighbourhoods”. The Management Bureau has to face the pressure of economic development from the local government and also the pressure of heritage protection from

both the national central government and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (Su, 2010). Therefore, in Lijiang, residents are not truly empowered within heritage management processes by acquiring more power to enhance equity from local government institutions. It is the Management Bureau which actually controls over the social, psychological, political and economic factors and decisions that shape local residents' lives.

## Discussion

Although community and governmental meetings for residents' consultation are frequently organised in the Old Town of Lijiang, they often become a platform to let residents know and approve the government's decisions. The government is playing a leading and predominant role within local heritage protection and management, and this has been also observed in many other Chinese heritage practices (for example in Zhai and Ng 2013; Tan and Altrock 2016). Within such an environment of government centralisation in Lijiang, residents sometimes lack strong confidence and willingness to participate in local participatory practices. Especially in profit-driven migrant business people, they lack the interest to be engaged even though the Management Bureau has invited their representatives to the governmental meetings. This is a manifestation of scarce civil society, wherein residents are so weak that they are not interested in participating in government-initiated participatory platforms to express their real thoughts and true feelings. In the IAP2 model, the degrees of community participation are categorised, in sequence from lower to higher degrees, as inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower (De Leiuon & Arthure, 2016; Li et al., 2020a). The degree of consulting is defined as "to obtain community feedback at the start of the management project to help with analysis, approaches and/or decisions" (Li et al., 2020a, pp 4). This requires that residents are consulted at the very

beginning and then their needs and interests are included throughout the whole management process.

Within the local heritage management of Lijiang, residents' voice is neither fully included nor totally excluded, demonstrating the degree of participation ranges from informing to consulting. If management schemes totally align with the government's expectations but ignore residents' interests, the degree is informing and then negative social resistance may happen, such as civil protests and petition letters from residents to higher-level government institutions (Zhai & Ng, 2013; Zhang & Li, 2016). In such a government-led process, local elites and community-based organisations are core to counterbalance the power between the government and residents, moving the degree of participation from informing towards consulting thus enhancing local civil society. Local heritage management could include more consultation practices to reach consensus, rather than through an informing process to build interaction with residents only on the level of permission-approval and community education. Furthermore, although it would be still hard to achieve community collaboration and empowerment within such a Chinese state-centralised environment, residents' participation reaching the degree of involvement can better benefit the whole management process from local contextual identification to plan-making to plan-execution (Li et al., 2020a).

To enhance community participation in the globe, the HUL approach proposes a dynamic and inclusive process for heritage management, moving beyond heritage *per se* to cover the whole urban environment (Li et al., 2020a; Rey-Perez & Siguencia Ávila, 2017). The HUL approach could be applicable to the Old Town of Lijiang and China as a whole because it

recommends integrating heritage resources in broader urban settings to mitigate local conflicts between heritage protection, booming tourism development and daily community activities. Especially, the first step of the HUL approach is identifying local contexts, including the identification of cultural, natural and human resources through community participation (Veldpaus, 2015). The identification step should be a consulting process to collect local interests and needs from a wide range of residents, not only local political leaders and elites (Morrison & Xian, 2016; Verdini et al., 2017). And then the identified and agreed items should be included in the final scheme through residents' involvement ensuring their interests are well understood and incorporated (Li et al., 2020a). This needs to seek a better balance point of the power between residents and local political leaders (decision-makers) who are leading local governments and heritage practices (Morrison & Xian, 2016).

Given various community participatory methods have been well developed and implemented within some other international contexts, these methods need to be further adapted to fit into China's situation rather than directly adopted (Li et al., 2020a). For example, an Australian project called Ballarat Imagine conducted a large community conversation before developing a new long-term strategy (Buckley et al., 2015). This project employed a value-based process to explore "the better understanding of what different communities value most in Ballarat, what they imagine for their future and what they do not want to lose". It seeks to explore and monitor both community value and the Outstanding Universal Value in local heritage properties (Buckley et al., 2015, pp103). Local communities' willingness, awareness and capacity towards participating in heritage protection and management are essential to facilitate this project successfully (Fayad &

Kendal, 2020). However, given the local conditions of public participation varying in both institutional systems and civil societies (Verdini, 2015), it is assumed the Ballarat Imagine could be an applicable method but need to be further adapted and tested its viability in China. Through the effective involvement of residents, universal heritage values can be integrated into local livelihood improvement and community development, avoiding “awkward engagements” defined by governmental agencies and experts (MacRae, 2017, pp 846). Therefore, community participation in China is still in a nascent stage showing its contextual characteristics, which needs to be advanced by learning from global approaches and localising them to be relevant to China’ contexts, to be more inclusive and reach a higher degree.

## Conclusion

Community participatory practices encounter many obstacles within cultural heritage management in urban China, including centralised governance, market-orientation and lack of professional expertise among residents (Li et al., 2020a; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Within such an environment, it remains difficult to let residents fully take responsibility for local heritage protection and management by following a purely bottom-up process (Verdini, 2015). Even though, the importance of community participation is also widely recognised when carrying out heritage projects and facing rapid urbanisation (Fan, 2014; Verdini et al., 2017). This chapter investigated the current situation of community participatory practices in the management process of the Old Town of Lijiang through interviews with local administrators, native and migrant residents. By doing so, community participation can be revealed within the context of cultural heritage management in China, indicating future actions and contributing to global theories.

In Lijiang, the importance of community participation has been recognised by local government institutions. Various stakeholder groups have been already engaged in the decision-making of local heritage management, such as discussing and approving new policies and institutional regulations. The representatives of both native and migrant residents are invited to governmental meetings, together with other stakeholders such as experts and local administrators. However, the representatives of residents are only local elites, appointed by the government. They need to be the intermediating between residents' and the government's interests and expectations. But they are mainly playing a role in line with the government's expectations, based on residents' perceptions. Local community participation is relying on a planning and permission-approval process, rather than on active grassroots activities. The Management Bureau has organised collective activities for residents' competence-building, including lectures and consulting meetings. But there is little progress in further enhancing residents' skills of participating in the decision-making of the old town.

In Chinese cultural heritage management, local elites and community-based organisations play a critical role in the negotiation process between governments and residents (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Verdini, 2015). Local community-based organisations, in Lijiang, including neighbourhood RCs and the association of guesthouses cannot only be considered the representatives of residents but also organisations under governments' strict control. Implementation of policies and institutional regulations is the prioritised work in their daily administration. Once the government's decisions deviate from local expectations, residents have to employ other platforms to get their opposite ideas heard, such as through the complaining

hotline and the mayor's mailbox. These two platforms are working well. Furthermore, public heritage projects are exclusively conducted by the Lijiang Old Town Management Company, "on behalf of" the residents'. Therefore, community participation in the decision-making process of the Old Town of Lijiang is taking place today, to a minimal degree, between informing and consulting.

To avoid social conflicts, in addition to the endeavours from local elites and community-based organisations, governmental institutions also need to play a vital role in communicating, educating, consulting and even collaborating with residents rather than just informing about finalised decisions. For example, within Lijiang's local governance system, as sectors of the Management Bureau, the Centre of Heritage Monitoring needs to continue organising collective activities regularly to raise public awareness and build their capacities in protecting vernacular culture, and the Old Town Management Co., Ltd should collect residents' interests before making schemes for public heritage projects. Also, the Department of Protection and Construction and the Department of Market Operation and Management need to respect and negotiate with residents about how to maintain, renovate, finance and (re)use their traditional dwellings. Furthermore, as China is lacking a strong civil society, the willingness, confidence and capacities of both native and migrant residents can also be an important variable to generate effective horizontal alliance between local individuals and heterogeneous organisations (Verdini, 2015). Inclusive participatory governance for cultural heritage, in urban China, is still nascent and needs to find a medium between top-down and bottom-up processes, to better include residents' interests into the government-led management process.

The participatory platforms and procedures that Lijiang has established can contribute to the holistic and dynamic process of HUL, as a management approach to global cultural heritage. Especially in cultural heritage like the Old Town of Lijiang which is continuously human-inhabited, improving community life and living conditions is the core issue when protecting heritage values and maintaining the population of the core community (Poulios, 2014; Shao, 2017). The implementation of the HUL approach relies on well-established public participatory procedures, to manage the balance between heritage protection, socio-economic development, nature conservation and community improvement.

This chapter demonstrates that the Old Town of Lijiang has conducted various participatory practices while their effectiveness is still not as high as residents expect. Therefore, in the following chapter, an international method of Imagine is adapted and tested in Lijiang, to investigate residents' perceptions about local HUL and their expectations towards local participatory practices. The enhancement and improvement of the local community participatory process in Lijiang are then further discussed under the theoretical framework of HUL, to advance heritage management approaches in China and also the whole globe.





## Introduction

Scope and design the PhD research, regarding community participation within cultural heritage management in China

01

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

## State-of-the-art

Compare Chinese and international cultural heritage practices to identify the research gap in literature.

02

## State-of-the-practice

Develop an assessment framework applied to the management practices of Chinese World Heritage; the Old Town of Lijiang is selected as the case.

03

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

## Case study #1

Explore the current state of local participatory practices in the Old Town of Lijiang as the case.

04

## Case study #2

Test an international participatory method of Imagine in Lijiang, to examine its viability and enhance local community participation.

05

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

## Conclusion

Respond to research questions, conclude the thesis and propose future recommendations.

06



## Chapter V IMAGINE THE OLD TOWN OF LIJIANG

*Contextualising community participation for cultural heritage management in Chinese urban contexts*

**This chapter is based on a journal article published with Habitat International:**

Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2021) Imagine the Old Town of Lijiang: Contextualising community participation for urban heritage management in China. *Habitat International*, 108, 102321. [doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2021.102321](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2021.102321).

Previous chapters have proven that Chinese community participation remains its characteristics of state-centralisation and government-led methodologies, differing from the international bottom-up methodology. This chapter aims to enhance the process of community participation in China, by testing and adapting a community participatory method, the (Ballarat) Imagine. Imagine was tested in the Old Town of Lijiang as an academic scoping exercise, to critically examine its viability and potential for contextualisation to the Chinese context. During the fieldwork, three workshops were organised with residents in Dayan, Shuhe and Baisha, which are the three housing clusters constituting the cultural World Heritage property. This chapter proposed a process of community participation in Lijiang, contributing to the hybrid methodology in China.

## Introduction

Cultural heritage management in China has been criticised by international scholars, as it is considered to be an unorthodox approach, putting economic pursuits first at the cost of heritage resources and vernacular cultural identities (Verdini et al., 2017). One of the main critics focusses on its top-down approach, wherein local governments play a centralised and exclusive role in decision-making (Li et al., 2020a; Zhao et al., 2020). This is particularly true for the government-led approaches, seeking maximum efficiency in wholesale urbanisation and transformation processes, resulting in tremendous heritage demolition, community removal and exclusion as the major outcome of Chinese urban (re)development strategies (Morrison & Xian, 2016; Verdini et al., 2017). While increasing the understanding of China's situation, more holistic and integrative approaches are urgently needed, innovatively managing heritage protection and (re)use in rapid urbanisation, to adhere to global standards but also maintain its own contextualised institutional, political and socio-cultural characteristics (Verdini et al., 2017).

The UNESCO 2011 Recommendation of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) was proposed not only as a new concept but also a new approach to cultural heritage management in urban contexts. Cities are considered herein the result of historical layering, in which natural, cultural and human attributes have accumulated over time in an ever-changing environment (Ji et al., 2020; Verdini et al., 2017). The HUL approach promotes the integration of urban conservation and development, whereas community participation is regarded as an essential tool to achieve this goal (UNESCO 2011). Heritage management is broadening the scope, from conserving built heritage in isolation to integrating heritage resources into sustainable urban

development (Rey-Perez & Siguencia Ávila, 2017; Ripp & Rodwell, 2015). Within this approach, the process of prioritising actions is pivotal, which can be based on residents' interests and their sense of satisfaction (Ji et al., 2020). Residents and their interests could then be included in the entire management process, from identification to programming and execution (Rey-Perez & Siguencia Ávila, 2017; Veldpaus, 2015).

While community participation is significant and growing, it is still limited in China (Li et al., 2020a; Zhao et al., 2020). At the same time, various participatory methods have been developed, tested and evaluated in other countries worldwide (Morrison & Xian, 2016). In America and also many European countries such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, community participation has been discussed and espoused in urban theories, encouraging local communities to participate in planning decision-making processes which can directly affect their daily activities (Arnstein, 1969; Lewis, 2015; van Heelsum, 2005). In China, cultural heritage management, in general, is government-led, wherein residents often lack sufficient platforms and competency to be engaged (Li et al., 2020b). It is still hard for residents to fully participate in heritage projects, due to the strong local context of state-centralisation (Li et al., 2020a). Even so, effective community consultation in the pre-plan making stage has been proven to be also key to achieve excellent outcomes within Chinese practices, which is evidenced in Wenhuali, Yangzhou and Tianzifang, Shanghai (Li et al., 2020a). Otherwise, civil resistance could take place, such as in the cases of Enning Road, Guangzhou and the Drum Tower Muslim District, Xi'an (Tan & Altrrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Public engagement can effectively reconcile conflicts between various stakeholders, and it is a practical solution to mitigate social tension issues in urban China (Verdini, 2015; Yung et al., 2014, 2017).

With the approval of HUL, it has become standard practice to include a wide range of stakeholders in cultural heritage management, including administrators, residents, experts, business people and developers (Mackay & Johnston, 2010; Rey-Perez & Sigüencia Ávila, 2017). Various participatory methods, e.g. interviews, workshops and residential meetings, have been developed for mapping heritage attributes, reaching consensus and resolving conflicts (Li et al., 2020a). Although these methods have proven themselves valid in participatory practices in contexts of democratic governance, they cannot be directly applied to China, in the contexts of state centralisation and rapid urbanisation (Li et al., 2020a; Morrison & Xian, 2016). So, there is a need to develop a contextualised process of community participation for China, rather than the usual state-led decide-announce-defend approach, where international methods are tested and adapted to national practices (Morrison & Xian, 2016).

Inspired by the HUL approach, the City of Ballarat in Australia facilitated a large conversation with the community called Ballarat Imagine, to be better informed on their interests and needs. This participatory engagement project successfully produced well-established procedures and a community vision of local conservation and development (Buckley et al., 2015). This chapter aims to contextualise community participation in China, by testing and adapting the (Ballarat) Imagine method to the Chinese context. The Imagine method was tested in the Old Town of Lijiang an academic scoping exercise. Based on the critical reflections of these experiments, this chapter has put forward recommendations for community participation within cultural heritage management in urban China.

The Old Town of Lijiang was selected as the case, due to its World Heritage status as well as its integrative developmental challenges of rapid urbanisation, including heritage commodification, over-touristification and gentrification. This situation is representative of many, if not most Chinese cultural heritage properties (Opschoor & Tang, 2011; Shao, 2017; Su, 2011). Besides this, in Lijiang, the engagement of local communities in heritage management processes has been recognised in the local government's working agendas. Although it is a World Heritage property which, in the view of the Lijiang authorities, should have the most advanced management practices, a well-accepted participatory process among the public has yet to be established (Li et al., 2020b; Su, 2010, 2011). During the fieldwork, three workshops were organised with residents in Dayan, Shuhe and Baisha, which are the three housing clusters constituting the World Heritage property. In the workshops, residents responded to three sets of Imagine questions focussing on how they feel about their historic urban landscape, but also on their ideas about future public engagement in local heritage management. This chapter discusses the contextualised process of community participation tailored to the management of the Old Town of Lijiang, setting out an outline to further test this method elsewhere in China.

## Community participation within HUL approach and the Imagine method

The HUL approach proposes a novel management approach for cultural heritage, by identifying and taking into account local challenges and conditions, through community participation (Wang & Gu, 2020). This landscape approach is helpful to holistically identify urban contexts as well as increase heritage values and local communities' quality of life, linking the past to the future (Luis Loures et al., 2011). Moving beyond built



environments, various other aspects including local infrastructure, crime, access, finance and labour force are also essential in the process of identifying local contexts (Luís Loures, 2015). In 2013, the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and Pacific Region (WHITRAP) initiated a programme to explore the implementation of the HUL approach in five pilot cities. These pilot cities encountered varying challenges such as increasing massive tourism, population growth and displacement and poor infrastructure, as represented in Table 6. The HUL approach promotes the development of heritage management approaches that integrate tangible and intangible attributes, broader values systems, and cope with its local natural and socio-economic contexts (WHITRAP, 2016).

These pilot cities implemented various methods of public engagement for contextual identification and decision-making, making them knowledge-based processes. As these processes were built on residents' input, their everyday living experiences, traditional practices and skills became fundamental to local heritage management (Li et al., 2020a; WHITRAP, 2016). The core principle of community participation is that residents can play a role in making local social, psychological, political and economic decisions that shape their daily lives (Li et al., 2020b; Morrison & Xian, 2016). The identification of diversified expectations of different communities can mitigate public resistance in local heritage practices, in which minority concerns and benefits also need to be sufficiently considered (Luis Loures et al., 2020). Within these pilot cities, various participatory methods were used to facilitate local community participation in decision-making, as well as, to negotiate different interests and build consensus (WHITRAP, 2016). The workshop has concluded as an effective method, both in Chinese and other international cases, especially in the areas of low public awareness and

capacities in heritage protection, that it can guide residents to better contribute active discussion, feedback and joint action rather than a passive audience (Gravagnuolo & Girard, 2017; Rey-Perez & Sigüencia Ávila, 2017). For example, in the city of Cuenca, Ecuador, workshops were organised with residents to assess the significance of the local landscape. In Rawalpindi, Pakistan, meetings, seminars and workshops were conducted to assess local conditions and vulnerabilities (Gravagnuolo & Girard, 2017). Both Cuenca and Suzhou conducted workshops to explore residents' ideas towards local historic urban landscape and then check if their interests were well understood and included (Rey-Perez & Sigüencia Ávila, 2017; Verdini et al., 2017).

Within the community participation of the two Chinese cases, local governments together with professionals played a strong role and actively led the management processes. In the Wujiang District of Suzhou, the local government commissioned university researchers to organise residential consultation workshops to approve the local developmental strategies (Verdini and Huang 2019). Besides, the local government of Hongkou District carried out public participatory processes in the preparation, open discussion and adjustment of making local plans and policies (WHITRAP, 2016). Because of the sufficient discussion and inclusion of residents' interests and needs, these two cases progressed well and achieved well-accepted outcomes among the public, even though the processes were still predominantly "government-led" (Verdini et al., 2017). This reflects, within such an environment of state-centralisation, government-led community participation could also be an applicable way for cultural heritage management in urban China, as long as residents' needs and interests are sufficiently discussed and included (Fan, 2014; Kou et al., 2018). But there

are many purely top-down processes taking place in China, causing civil resistance (Fan, 2014; Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Therefore, the key point has become how the government-led processes can be balanced to effectively engage and include residents' interests and needs in relation to both local heritage protection and socio-economic development, as this chapter attempted to achieve, through workshops and conversations with the residents (Li et al., 2020b).

The departure points of these pilot cities were seeking to integrate heritage resources into broader urban development and planning contexts, as HUL is characterised by localised dynamic natural, socio-cultural and economic processes (Wang & Gu, 2020; WHITRAP, 2016). Therefore, from the identification phase, participatory methods need to be conducted, not only to identify heritage attributes and values but also local resources and social concern issues (WHITRAP, 2016). Intending to reach an agreement on local conservation and development strategies, the local authority of Ballarat conducted a project titled Ballarat Imagine to facilitate conversations between residents and government. During the project, three Imagine questions were asked with residents: 1) what do you love? 2) what would you want to retain? and 3) what would you like to change? (Buckley et al., 2015). This project was pioneering to employ a value-based process to gain a "better understanding of what different communities value most in Ballarat, what they imagine for their future and what they do not want to lose" (Buckley et al., 2015, pp.103).

The Ballarat Imagine was successfully applied to collect residents' ideas towards the historic urban landscape. And the three Imagine questions were well established to identify local contexts, moving beyond built heritage to

covering the whole local environment of urban conservation and development (Buckley et al., 2015). For example, intangible attributes of the local areas were also elicited from Ballarat residents' responses, such as traditional music, arts, clean fresh air and public safety (City of Ballarat, 2013b). In China, the pre-plan making stage has not been well established yet, having failed to involve residents for local contextual identification in heritage management (Li et al., 2020a; Morrison & Xian, 2016). Furthermore, given the differences of local conditions in public administration and institutional systems, residents' willingness and expectation to be engaged in heritage management could be different from other countries, and this is key when discussing Chinese contextualised community participation (Li et al., 2020a). Therefore, this chapter employed the Imagine method as an academic scoping exercise, conducted in Lijiang, through three workshops with local residents, clustered per neighbourhood. The workshops embraced the discussions of both residents' responses to the three questions, concerning the local contextual identification and their willingness to be engaged in the future, reflecting on the Chinese contextualised approach of heritage management.

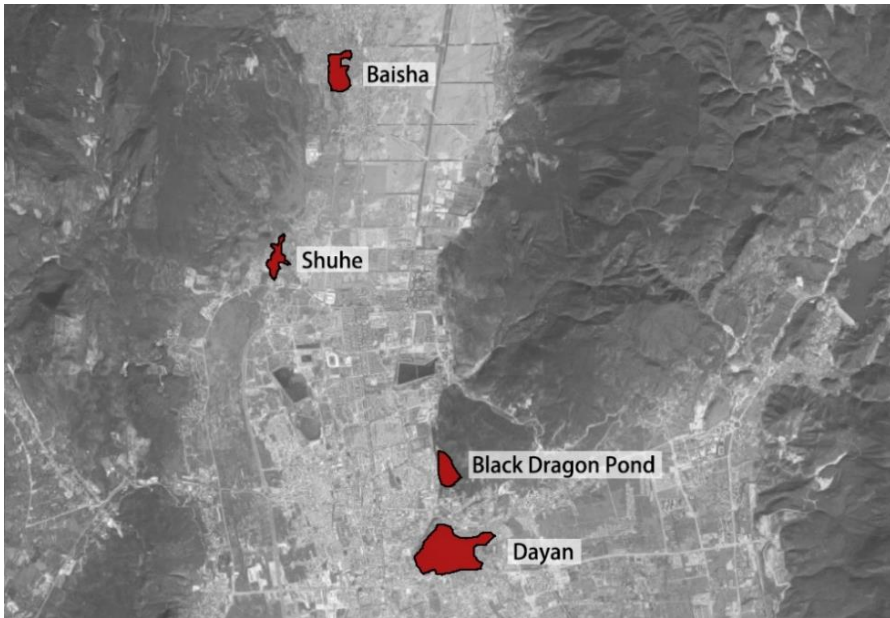
Table 6 Summary of HUL implementation on the five pilot cities (Adapted from WHITRAP 2016)

| <b>Pilot Cities</b>                     | <b>Ballarat</b>   | <b>Shanghai<br/>(Hongkou District)</b>  | <b>Suzhou<br/>(Wujiang District)</b>   | <b>Cuenca<br/>(the historic centre)</b>   | <b>Rawalpindi<br/>(the old core)</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Challenges in Local Heritage Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism blooming</li> <li>- Population growth</li> <li>- Climate change affecting farming communities</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development-orientation</li> <li>- Poor local facilities</li> <li>- Economic recession</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High entrepreneurial attitude</li> <li>- Extensive migrant workforce</li> <li>- Sense of belongingness</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Population displacement</li> <li>- Living expense Increase</li> <li>- Losing intangible heritage</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poor infrastructure</li> <li>- High-density neighbourhoods</li> <li>- Low public awareness of heritage</li> </ul>  |
| Participatory Processes                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ballarat Imagine for well-established procedures of wide community conversations</li> <li>- Community forums for public access to information</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey the community's will</li> <li>- Open discussions</li> <li>- Public participation in the preparation and adjustment of local plans and policies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Residential workshops for cultural mapping</li> <li>- Final development scheme presented in participatory sessions</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sixteen citizen workshops for cultural mapping</li> <li>- Prioritisation of landscape quality objectives from citizens' views</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings, seminars and workshops with residents, shopkeepers, and administrators for reaching a consensus of heritage values and attributes</li> </ul>         |
| Perspectives and Results                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Underpinning people-centred approaches and partnerships</li> <li>- Building a comprehensive "living" knowledge database</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enlarging conservation scope targeted from single heritage buildings to the whole historic area</li> <li>- Broadening heritage management framework</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving local infrastructure</li> <li>- Protecting rural historic landscape, including water systems and fishponds</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raising local awareness about diverse and complex heritage values</li> <li>- Agreement on joint research about the HUL approach</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focusing on built heritage, traditional occupations and bazaar resilience and religious landscape.</li> <li>- Building common ground among partners</li> </ul> |

## Methodology

### *Facts about the case study of the Old Town of Lijiang*

The Old Town of Lijiang, which origin can be traced back to 800 years ago to the Song Dynasty (AD 960–1279), is famous for its many vernacular dwellings, cultural conventions and rituals of ethnic minority groups, as well as, natural environments including snow mountains, grasslands and waters (Shao, 2017; Su et al., 2020). It was an important centre for cultural and technological exchanges between various ethnic groups such as Naxi, Han, Bai and Tibetan people. Until today, the townscape and architectural characteristics of the Old Town have retained the residential traditions of these ethnic groups. As a World Heritage property, the core protected zone of Lijiang’s old town is 145.6 ha and the buffer zone is 582.3 ha. Lijiang’s traditional dwellings are characterised as “numerous two-storeyed, tile-roofed, timber-framed houses combining elements of Han and Zang architecture and decoration”. It consists of three heritage housing clusters, Dayan Old Town (including Heilong Pond), Baisha and Shuhe, as shown in Figure 13 (UNESCO 1997).



*Figure 13 Geographical distribution of the core protected zones of the Old Town of Lijiang in the City (Adapted from the Conservation Plan of World Heritage Site: Lijiang Old Town, 2013)*

Ever since its inscription on the World Heritage List in 1997, tourism has increased enormously in Lijiang, resulting in a booming tourism industry, which is key to the growth and vitality of local economic development (Shao, 2017). In 2108, Lijiang was visited by 46.4 million tourists (Lijiang Bureau of Statistics 2019), compared to 1.7 million in 1997 (Shao 2017). Parallel to the exponential growth of the tourism market, “tens of thousands of domestic migrants” mostly from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, also called by the natives as new Lijiangers (xin lijiang ren), have moved to Lijiang in order to open businesses such as guesthouses, restaurants and shops, contributing to the increase of land value (Su et al., 2020). Native residents, called old Lijiangers (lao lijiang ren), have rented their houses to migrant business people and moved out from the old town. House owners became the occupation of the old Lijiangers (formerly farmers) as the rents were high

enough, to become their only source of income. Most population living in the old town today is employed by the tourism sector (Shao, 2017). Paradoxically, the homes and lifestyle of the old Lijiangers are core to the cultural significance of the old town, its crafts and rituals, which are also key resources for the local tourism-based economy (Shao, 2017; Su, 2015). Therefore, the participation of the native residents' is key to achieve a better balance between urban conservation and development, and ensure the protection of Lijiang's heritage values for present and future generations (Shao, 2017).

The local government has established a specialised institution for daily administrative and protective affairs of the old town, which is called the Conservation and Management Bureau of the World Heritage Lijiang Old Town (hereafter: the Management Bureau, shijie wenhua yichan lijiang gucheng guanli baohu ju) (Su, 2010). The Management Bureau organises governmental meetings and also commits Residents' Committees (RCs, shequ juweihui) to conduct community meetings at the neighbourhood level, to facilitate participatory practices in heritage management. Earlier research revealed that these participatory platforms do not work effectively enough, as the degree of local participation is still minimal (Li et al., 2020c). Accordingly, the heritage identification phase has public residential consultation procedures yet to be established. Moreover, the participatory platforms do not include residents' interests in the phases of programming and execution. The government and local elites have then benefited more from tourism revenues. than any other stakeholders, including the native residents (Su, 2015). The local elites in Lijiang, including both natives and migrants, are either residents who have a high reputation in vernacular culture, or who run a big business for a long time. They have close



relationships with the local government, appointed as representatives of residents to play a role in the governmental meetings (Li et al., 2020c). Therefore, public participatory procedures in Lijiang need to be advanced, further following local expectations, to better engage local residents, and not only those of the local elites, to contribute traditional knowledge and skills, so that also their needs can be included in heritage management strategies and plans.

### *Data collection during fieldwork*

The implementation of HUL in Ballarat included: 1) wide community conversations to collect public aspirations, visions, ideas and interests in safeguarding local heritage and promoting sustainable development, and 2) partnership-building of various stakeholders to form a bottom-up decision-making process (Buckley et al., 2015). However, the decision-making process of Chinese cultural heritage management is government-led, differing from international wide-spread bottom-up approaches (Li et al., 2020a), while there are no effective public consultation activities carried out in Lijiang (Li et al., 2020c). Therefore, as shown in Fig. 14, this chapter has developed the methodology endeavouring to adapt Ballarat experience to Lijiang, by “imagining” 1) residents’ feelings about Lijiang’s historic urban landscape and 2) residents’ expectations about how their interests can be sufficiently integrated into local government-led heritage practices. The data collection and analysis processes are presented in the following sections.

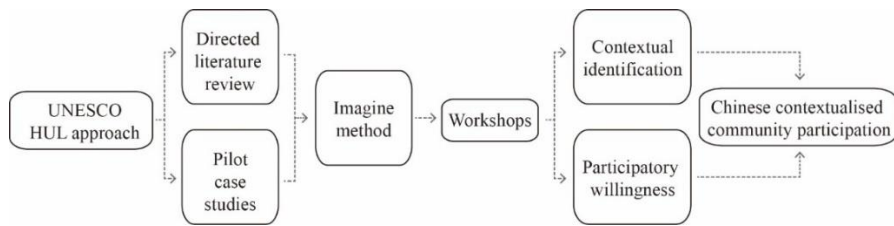


Figure 14 Methodological scheme

The data collection was carried out during fieldwork between September and December 2019 in Lijiang, China. Three workshops were organised with 30 local residents, one per heritage housing cluster, including ten residents per workshop. Workshop participants were invited at random, as long as who had either lived or worked in the old town for over a year and knew vernacular culture well. These invited residents were of various occupations, including local public administrators, business people, teachers and workers. Their various occupations can contribute to the discussion from the perspectives of different stakeholder groups. The demographic and social characteristics of the participants are as demonstrated in Table 7.

Workshop participants discussed 1) their responses to the three Imagine questions and 2) their willingness to be engaged in local heritage management. For each Imagine question, participants can pick up to three items from nine optional items, A) heritage buildings, streets and bazaars; B) traditional conventions and rituals; C) natural parks, water systems, snow mountains and grasslands; D) community services and facilities; E) tourist services and facilities; F) community economic activities and employment; G) public transportation, pedestrian and parking spaces; H) schools and educational institutes; and I) others. These items helped participants understand and scope the local historic urban landscape and, in the

meantime, they can also supplement their own personal ideas through the item#. Subsequently, residents addressed their ideas towards each optional item and the reasons why they picked up the specific items in response to each question. This was a checking process for residents to understand each optional item properly as well as for the investigator to consult with residents about their expectations effectively.

Residents' willingness to participate in local heritage management was then collected through five questions. The questions included: 1) do you think the old town conservation is important? 2) do you think the collaboration between the government, experts/professionals and residents is important? 3) have you ever participated in local heritage management? 4) are you willing to be engaged? and 5) what should the roles of the government, experts/professionals, native and migrant residents be? In the workshops, participants answered the five questions one by one, to discuss their willingness to be engaged and also how future local participatory practices could be conducted, based on current local situations and conditions.

*Table 7 Demographic and social characteristics of the workshop participants*

| Housing clusters |                          | Dayan | Shuhe | Baisha | Total |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| Gender           | Male                     | 70%   | 40%   | 40%    | 50%   |
|                  | Female                   | 30%   | 60%   | 60%    | 50%   |
| Age              | 0-12                     | 0%    | 0%    | 0%     | 0%    |
|                  | 13-17                    | 0%    | 0%    | 0%     | 0%    |
|                  | 18-25                    | 0%    | 10%   | 0%     | 3.3%  |
|                  | 26-35                    | 30%   | 70%   | 50%    | 50%   |
|                  | 36-45                    | 30%   | 20%   | 20%    | 23.3% |
|                  | 46-55                    | 30%   | 0%    | 10%    | 13.3% |
|                  | 56-65                    | 10%   | 0%    | 20%    | 10%   |
|                  | 66+                      | 0%    | 0%    | 0%     | 0%    |
| Ethnic           | Naxi                     | 50%   | 50%   | 40%    | 46.7% |
|                  | Bai                      | 10%   | 0%    | 10%    | 6.7%  |
|                  | Hani                     | 0%    | 10%   | 0%     | 3.3%  |
|                  | Lahu                     | 0%    | 10%   | 0%     | 3.3%  |
|                  | Han                      | 40%   | 30%   | 50%    | 40%   |
| Education        | Primary school and lower | 10%   | 10%   | 0%     | 6.7%  |
|                  | Middle school            | 10%   | 10%   | 30%    | 16.7% |
|                  | High school              | 30%   | 30%   | 30%    | 30%   |
|                  | College and university   | 50%   | 50%   | 40%    | 46.7% |
|                  | Master and above         | 0%    | 0%    | 0%     | 0%    |
| Occupation       | Public administration    | 20%   | 0%    | 30%    | 16.7% |
|                  | Tourism business         | 30%   | 60%   | 30%    | 40%   |
|                  | Teacher                  | 10%   | 10%   | 0%     | 6.6%  |
|                  | Worker                   | 0%    | 10%   | 0%     | 3.3%  |
|                  | House owner              | 40%   | 20%   | 40%    | 33.3% |

### *Content analysis of workshop transcripts*

The complex nature of this study concerned Chinese contextualised community participation, by testing the Imagine methodology and then collecting data from the residential workshops in Lijiang. The method of inductive content analysis was used to analyse the workshop transcripts, qualitatively (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The workshop transcripts were processed to inductively demonstrate residents' ideas and perceptions, with numeral results of the optional items to each question integrated into the qualitative

analysis process. The analysis process included counting the frequencies of optional items, open coding, creating categories and abstraction (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

First, the frequencies of the optional items were counted, demonstrating the direct and manifest contents of residents' attitudes and ideas. The numeral results were separately presented for the three housing clusters and then counted in total. Second, throughout reviewing the workshop transcripts, notes and headings, as open codes, were written along with the text, reflecting all aspects of the responses. All the collected open codes were grouped and refined to several higher-order categories, providing a means of interpreting the data, by identifying the similarity and dissimilarity of open codes. And then, abstraction involved a process of judgement to provide a general description of the concerning research topics following the categories. For example, Fig. 3 demonstrates the inductive analysis process of residents' responses to the first Imagine question, "what do you love?".

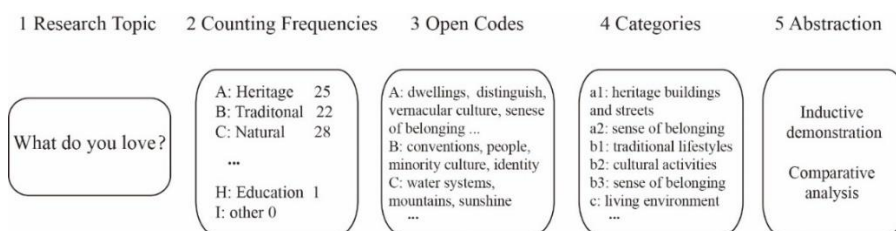


Figure 15 The inductive analysis process of residents' responses to "what do you love?"

Further on in the analysis process, results and findings from the Imagine workshops were brought into the discussion section. On the one hand, the Imagine as a participatory method for the identification of local contexts, its viability and effectiveness in Lijiang was revealed, compared to Ballarat Imagine. On the other hand, based on residents' attitudes and willingness of

public engagement and Chinese local contexts, the process of community participation was critically discussed. Besides, the significant roles of local elites and community organisations were highlighted in such a contextualised process.

## Data analysis and findings

### *Imagining historic urban landscape of the Old Town of Lijiang*

The Imagine method employed the HUL approach to identify the local historic urban landscape in Lijiang (see Figure 16). The workshops enable a discussion with residents about their feelings and ideas. In the workshops, historic buildings and streets, traditional conventions and rituals, and natural environments were most favoured and residents, then hoped, these landscape layers can be well conserved in the future. Also, local economic activities, tourism development and community facilities were recognised as significant layers of the landscape.



*Figure 16 “I love many things in our Lijiang’s old town, but the things that I love most are traditional dwellings, our ethnic lifestyles and the natural environment of mountains and waters”, said a native resident. The historic urban landscape of the Old Town of Lijiang, view along a stream in Dayan, consists of an ancient water-supply system, traditional timber-framed dwellings, ethnic-minority-style decoration, stone pavement, followers, trees, people, etc. @Xiaoyan He*

Tangible and intangible heritage attributes were favoured among workshop participants, concerning traditional residential buildings (n=25) and local conventions and rituals (n=22). These public discussions with residents developed an open knowledge-based process for local cultural mapping. Heritage could be the attributes that residents consider valuable in their traditional socio-cultural practices, not just officially authorised traditional buildings. And heritage was also recognised to be useful and significant in their daily life. They openly expressed their affections,

“Of course, I love traditional courtyard dwellings and historic streets like Sifang Jie. They are the main component of our old town. Besides, we have old bridges, streams, and many ancient trees, which I also love pretty much. We need to conserve and maintain them” (A native from Dayan).

“I really love our traditional rituals and conventions as they can enhance the historical and cultural atmosphere of our old town. When joining collective activities to celebrate traditional festivals with tourists, I feel super proud of our Naxi culture” (A native from Baisha).

Furthermore, workshop participants valued and showed their love to local natural environments the most (n=28 out of 30), including the ancient water-supply system distributed within the old town, Heilong Pond, grasslands and Yulong Snow Mountain. “Lijiang’s old town essentially is a place where people live. The main reason why I decided to stay here is the beautiful and clean natural environment”, as a migrant owner of a guesthouse from Shuhe stated. Besides, said a native elderly from Shuhe, “others may love our traditional dwellings most, but for me, local natural landscapes – the blue sky, white snow mountains and cool river water are the true soul of Lijiang”.

Workshop participants then also addressed their worries to these landscape layers facing the challenges of rapid urbanisation, indicating their vulnerabilities and future actions to change the status quo. “our natural environment, especially waters and snow mountains, has degenerated because of the urban development and massive tourism over last 20 years. While protecting the old town, the natural environment should be also conserved”, as a native administrative noted. “I really miss our traditional lifestyles. When I was young, I can buy home-made liquor around from my neighbours. But now, they all have left. The break of our old neighbourhood relationships is also a way of breaking down the old town”, a native elderly from Dayan addressed his disappointment. This can be observed in Figure



17, revealing how residents valued their local living environments and their willingness to retain, change and then improve them.

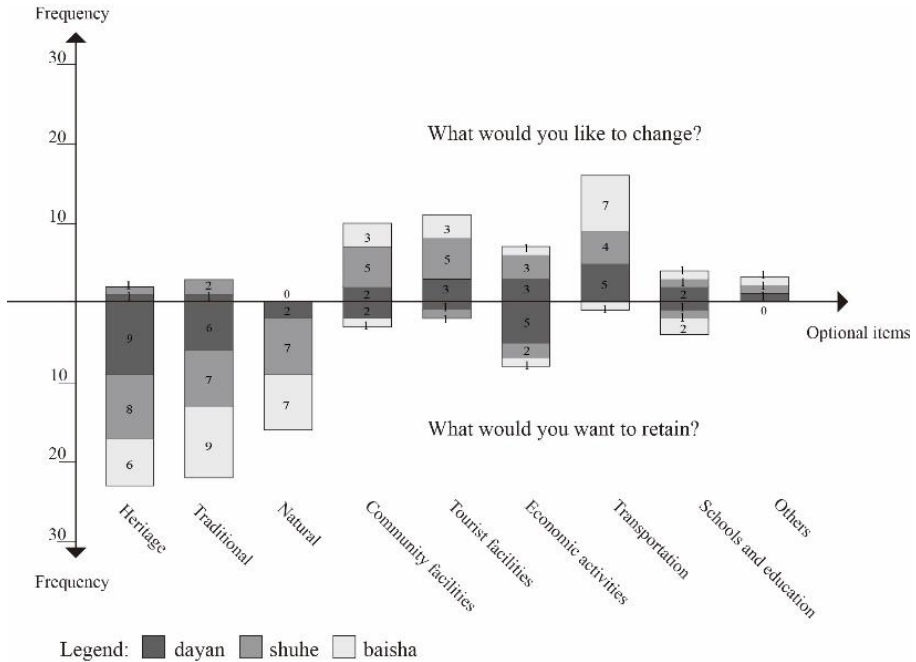


Figure 17 Quantitative results of the second and third Imagine questions

Interestingly, residents' attitudes to local economic activities showed a dual character. Eight workshop participants would like to retain or even further facilitate the economic atmosphere within the old town. And their statements tended to focus on economic profits earned from local heritage-related businesses, saying, "most natives were farmers, only by tourism development can they increase their income", said a native. And then a guesthouse owner added, "we need to further promote tourism activities for local economic development as there is no great manufacturing industry in Lijiang". To develop the tourism-related businesses further, a native administrator addressed, "in Baisha, public toilets are not enough about

both amount and condition, and we also need volunteers to improve tourists' experiences. We really need a new cultural-economic plan."

However, although the importance of tourism has been well recognised in local communities, residents also showcased their dissatisfaction with the economic development process. A Dayan native expressed his worries about the possible negative influence of massive tourism on local natural environments,

"I don't think tourist cable-cars should reach the core zone of Yulong Snow Mountain directly, even if we can earn a lot of money from that. Cable cars run extensively every day and this will definitely damage the natural environment of the mountain".

"Even though tourism is the main driving force for our Lijiang's economic development", said a Shuhe native resident, "we also need to incorporate tourism-related activities into our vernacular culture". A native businessman further explained this, "but now, many people conduct their business not related to local products, like selling Chongqing hotpots and Japanese-style guesthouses rather than silver-smithing or Lijiang traditional food, only following what tourists prefer". "By developing vernacular cultural business, we can create more employment opportunities for native residents but this is not well managed", a native added. Furthermore, workshop participants in Dayan also addressed their dissatisfaction towards faking historic-style buildings (*fanggu jianzhu*, in Chinese) and traditions' disappearing, "if everything is continuously profit-oriented and tourism-centralised, we will lose our Naxi cultural identity and characteristics attached to the old town". Therefore, the dual character of residents' economic interests to feel about the local landscape is not conflicted. The local economy is significant to

benefit residents' incomes, and it should not be totally profit-oriented tourism development but built on the enhancement of vernacular cultures.

Issues related to local communities' daily life were highlighted in the workshops, which always matter given Lijiang's old town is still human-inhabited, including transportation, education and neighbourhood administration. For example, the prioritised problem of transportation was the inconvenience of the existing action forbidding cars' and motorbikes' to enter the old town. Native residents stated that this was only focused on the improvement of tourists' experiences, saying, "it is not convenient for us to carry daily groceries to homes, too heavy", and "if our family members are ill, how can we take them to the city hospital without driving a car? It is not possible to call for an ambulance every time that we don't feel well". Furthermore, participants agreed that grocery markets, clinics and schools played an important role in communities' everyday life. But community facilities in neighbourhood centres, in general, were also criticized, "most facilities are only for elderly people' use, and young people are not engaged so they would possibly lose the connection with our neighbourhood".

Through the discussion about how residents feel about the historic urban landscape, their ideas were varied, either towards a specific Imagine question or a landscape layer. It is proved that people love and value not only built heritage but also other heritage that makes their identities and living environments special, such as natural systems, Naxi Dongba characters, music and traditional festivals. Furthermore, the discussion of economic activities indicates that local tourism-related should be more built on vernacular culture and community improvement, than a pure profit-oriented process. Therefore, the identification procedures, established from

the test of the Imagine method in Lijiang, can effectively collect residents' interests and needs, moving beyond isolated tangible and intangible heritage to covering a broader historic urban landscape.

### *Imagining participatory governance for the Old Town of Lijiang*

All workshop participants agreed on the importance of heritage protection, and almost all of them (26 out of 30) supported the collaboration between the local government, experts/professionals and residents in heritage management. Yet, they also concluded that "collaborative governance is not realistic". Because local political leaders (lingdaos, in Chinese) retained dominant power in decision-making and residents were not confident in their weak voice to be heard. "If we have interests deviating from the lingdaos', the government would implement their own decisions and exclude us. So, we have to trust our government and then, I don't need to be engaged". Within such a local environment, the roles of residents themselves, their representatives, the government and professionals were then discussed to find how would community participation be possible and useful.

While forecasting the future of community participation in Lijiang, workshop participants agreed that the local government was needed to initiate and lead heritage projects, but they also agreed that the local government could facilitate a much wider community consultation. They expected that local state institutions were to provide more administrative and financial support. Accordingly, the local government should request professionals to communicate with residents not only in the identification phase but also in the other two phases of programming and execution. So, the residents' interests would be much better incorporated, or as one resident put it: "we

must be reflected in the final scheme". The need to empower local residents was also addressed, "both the local government and professionals need to create a better atmosphere for public heritage and provide us with participatory platforms", said a native from Baisha. Furthermore, a native from Shuhe noted that competence-building activities should be organised for both the government and residents,

"Some lingdaos do not know our Naxi culture deeply, but they have the power to finalise heritage management programmes. This is not good. So, educational activities about vernacular culture and traditional housing renovation should not be only organised for us but also for these decision-makers. Lacking professional skills, they would not be able to lead us to conduct heritage protection practices in a good manner".

With regard to residents' roles, the participation in heritage management of native and migrant residents was discussed. Native residents addressed their willingness and ability to contribute ideas to local heritage, attributes and values. Migrant residents also expressed the interest in learning vernacular culture and conducting heritage-related business in order to benefit the old town protection. Workshop participants explained this further,

"Old Lijangers need to bring back traditional Naxi culture to the old town, while new Lijangers can learn about local culture and lifestyles and then respect them. We all have the duty to join the process of local heritage protection" (A native from Dayan).

"Native residents should play a role in mediating the interests of new Lijangers and the government. Especially, we have

neighbourhood RCs (consisting of natives) and they usually organise community meetings to inform institutional regulations. They also need to collect our suggestions and then propose to the Management Bureau” (A migrant businessman from Baisha).

“We have representatives of both new and old Lijiangers to participate in governmental meetings at the Management Bureau. In the meetings, they should not only express their own interests but also raise local concerned issues, to ensure residents’ needs are truly included in final project schemes, in relation to heritage protection, living requirements and business-running” (A native businessman from Shuhe).

Through the discussion of expected local participatory governance, residents have recognised the significant and leading role of the local government in the heritage practices of Lijiang’s old town, especially at a strategic administration level. The local government was expected to organise public consultation with various social actors, experts and residents, which may avoid local political leaders wield exclusive power in decision-making. Furthermore, both native and migrant residents have shown the willingness to be engaged more actively, contributing ideas to protect the old town and facilitate the local economy. Their representatives, including neighbourhood RCs and local elites, need to keep raising local community issues and negotiating with lingdaos when participating in governmental meetings. The process of local heritage management can be government-led, but at the same time, public interests should also be well-considered and included.

## Discussion: Strengthening community participation within cultural heritage management in urban China

Chinese Central Government has formulated several legislative documents to ensure community participation procedures in urban conservation and development planning processes, including the Measures for the Administration of City Purple Lines (2004) and the Town and Country Planning Act (2008) (The Central Government of PRC, 2004, 2008). However, local governments sometimes only detail and implement this legislation for meeting administrative procedure requirements, rather than conducting genuine community participation to gather public interests for heritage practices (Zhai and Ng 2013; Morrison and Xian 2016). Therefore, local governments are key in expanding participation levels in current Chinese heritage management practices, as they decide and shape how residents and their interests are included in the whole management process (Morrison & Xian, 2016; Tang, 2015).

Given the centralised administrative role of governments in China, it would be difficult to induce wider and more effective community participation within cultural heritage management, solely by residents' initiatives (Fan, 2014; Morrison & Xian, 2016). Differing from bottom-up approaches, the process of community participation needs to be contextualised to fit China's contexts (Morrison & Xian, 2016). In Lijiang, as investigated in Li et al., (2020c), the local government has organised various activities including community and governmental meetings to engage residents in local heritage practices. But actually, residents are merely engaged symbolically in which local decision-makers have predominant power leading decision-making processes (Li et al., 2020c). In line with that, as the experimental process of the Imagine method in Lijiang has shown, residents have the willingness to

be engaged but lack the confidence and platforms to get their voices heard and included. Additionally, residents are not keen to fully undertake local heritage management practices by themselves. Local governments, therefore, as expected to play a leading role in conducting the process and facilitating the wider community participation in cultural heritage management.

In China, cultural heritage practices mainly occur in three main phases: identification, programming and execution (Li et al., 2020a; Veldpaus, 2015). The identification phase, carried out in the very beginning, aims to not only recognise heritage significance (attributes and values) but also understand local broader urban contexts (Verdini et al., 2017). While the governments provide the information of local developmental administrative and strategic foci, heritage experts and professionals should be committed to working with residents on cultural mapping and public interests' collection (Fan, 2014; Verdini et al., 2017). In Lijiang, however, "community consultation" has only happened when a heritage scheme is finalised and about to be implemented, between programming and execution phases. Because of the skipping of the identification phase, residents interests have not been well included in the heritage scheme. As a result, first-hand knowledge of residents on the cultural values of the local heritage is neglected, and local community commitment to the heritage and its future developments has not been facilitated yet (Li et al., 2020c). All of this may trigger civil resistance and protests towards future development plans, initiated by local governments, professional and business elites (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

Figure 18 presents a proposed process for Lijiang's community participation, which is built upon current local participatory platforms and the test of the



Imagine method. In the whole process, the Management Bureau needs to play a role in authorising and commissioning professionals and neighbourhood RCs to organise community meetings for residential consultation. Besides, the governmental meetings are also necessary to be conducted with the representatives of residents, for raising local concerned issues and enabling feedback. In the identification phase, residential dialogue and consultation are expected in community meetings with residents (including ordinary citizens as well as cultural and business elites), heritage professionals and neighbourhood RCs. As tested in the Imagine workshops, in addition to mapping both tangible and intangible heritage, residents can also show the willingness to conserve other landscape layers which they value in everyday life, in relation to local cultural, natural, economic and social resources. Therefore, within Chinese cultural heritage management, residents' interests and statements can also be collected to help professionals bring the requirements of both heritage protection and local urban development into the initial heritage scheme. Only by doing so, the role of residents can be strengthened into a role of consulting, rather than informing since the identification phase, with regard to the degree of community participation (Li et al., 2020a).

It is necessary to ensure residents' rights and include their interests throughout the next programming and execution phases within Chinese cultural heritage management. Local elites and community-based organisations, as residents' representatives, need to play a role in negotiating with local governments about the initial heritage scheme (Li et al., 2020a; Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). In China, local governments usually establish management committees, whose main responsibilities are on the discussion and adjustment of heritage schemes, when their vote is in

need for urban matters (Morrison & Xian, 2016). Local elites and community-based organisations are part of the committee, and they can play a strong role in mobilising residents, collecting public interests and raising local concerns (Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhai & Ng, 2013). Therefore, for Lijiang and also other Chinese heritage practices, after the initial scheme is discussed at the neighbourhood level, the representatives of residents then need to bring residents' feedback, through the governmental meetings to negotiate with lingdaos, experts and professionals. Their effective participation can ensure residents' interests are well understood, by decision-makers and the heritage scheme addresses them. Before the scheme is finalised, ready to be implemented, residents should have the right to check if their interests are well included in the adjusted scheme, through community meetings. And then, they can either approve or object it. If a scheme is rejected, residents' suggestions should be posted on Public Notices and then the scheme needs to be discussed in community meetings again. In doing so, the degree of Chinese community participation could increase and keep evolving, wherein residents can truly have a voice in the government-led management process, better finding a balance between conflicting interests (Li et al., 2020a).

Chinese contextualised community participation cannot be built on a purely bottom-up process. In practice, cultural heritage management in Chinese urban contexts is government-led, wherein local governments play an indispensable role in administrative and financial support. Even though, wide community consultation, like the procedures established from the Imagine method, is essential in the identification phase, to collect public interests and avoid civil resistance (Fan, 2014; Verdini et al., 2017). And then, the representatives of residents should have the right and willingness to keep raising local community voices and issues in the next programming and

execution phases. However, sometimes, lingdaos retain exclusive power and have a great influence on the decision-making process, following their own willingness for political promotion. And the representatives of residents then do not have the power to revise the scheme which has been approved by the lingdaos (Morrison & Xian, 2016). Therefore, there is a legal requirement to let local governments incorporate public feedback and community issues raised from open community discussions, “following the issuing of Public Notices” (Morrison & Xian, 2016, pp.211). Only by doing so, when facing pressure from local political leaders, residents can be more confident to negotiate with local governments and better include their interests. It is a shift from that the local government is the exclusive final decision-maker to the government leads the process on behalf of both local political leaders and common residents.

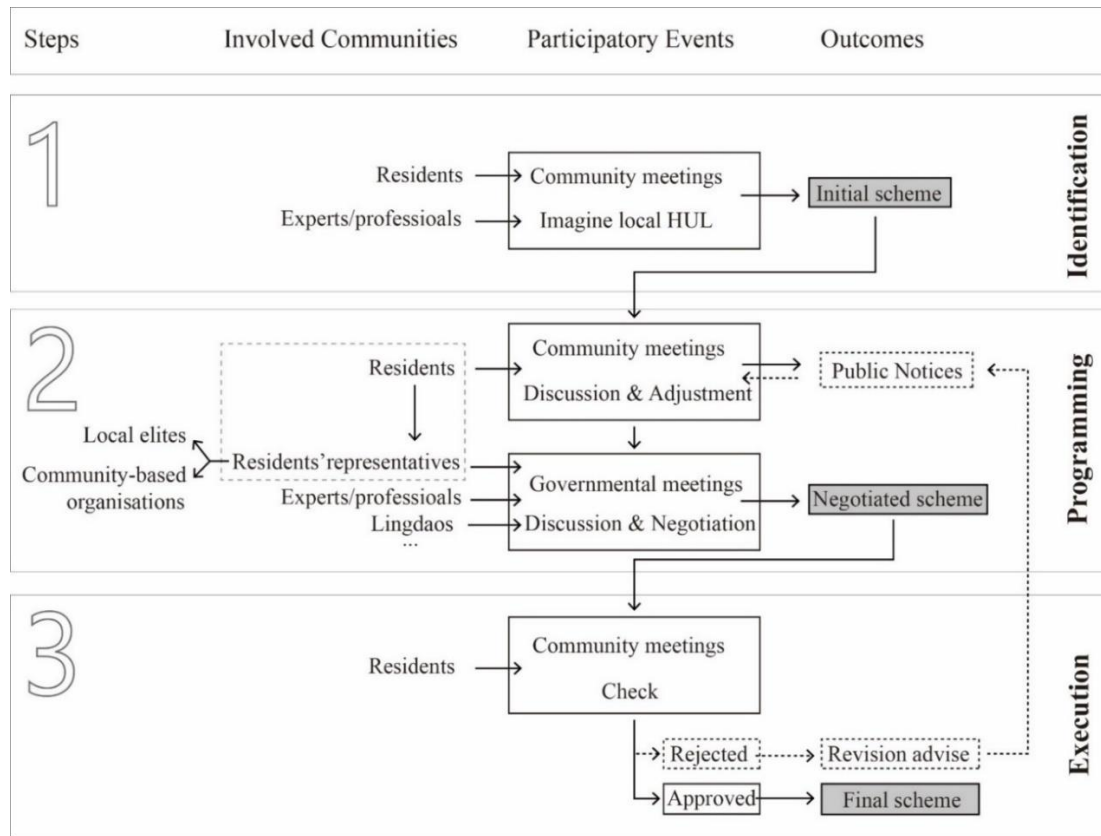


Figure 18 A proposed process of Lijiang's community participation

## Conclusion

Since the approval and implementation of the UNESCO HUL Recommendation, there have been increasing demands for more involvement of various stakeholders in the decision-making of cultural heritage management (Verdini, 2015). In the meanwhile, the methodologies of bottom-up decision-making in urban conservation and development planning are being ever more implemented worldwide (Pissourios, 2014; Lewis, 2015). But still, in China, governments play a centralised and leading role while residents lack platforms, knowledge and skills in participating in the decision-making of cultural heritage practices (Li et al., 2020a, 2020b). Chinese cultural heritage management is more top-down, (Fan, 2014; Li et al., 2020a; Zhao et al., 2020), and international bottom-up processes of decision-making are limited and hard to expand in China (Verdini, 2015). This chapter has well tested the Imagine method in Lijiang as an academic scoping exercise, to critically reflect on the contextualisation of cultural heritage management in urban China from a global perspective.

The research findings have confirmed that in Lijiang, 1) the Imagine method is effective to identify local contexts through public consultation, and 2) the expected public participation in local communities differs from the bottom-up process applied in the City of Ballarat (2013). Through the Imagine method, the identification of Lijiang's HUL follows a holistic process, which includes (tangible and intangible) heritage attributes, community values and broader urban environments that people love and value in their daily life. Various layers of local urban landscape are well discussed and presented, contributing to a better understanding of both local heritage and living environments. In terms of the expected local community participatory process, residents do not think they should fully be the decision-maker but

want local governments to initiate, lead and fund heritage practices to provide an enabling institutional environment. Although this is a government-led process, wide community consultation and conversation are necessarily carried out since the initial identification phase, to sufficiently discuss residents' interests and benefits. Furthermore, local elites and community-based organisations, as representatives of residents, should be able to keep exchanging ideas between the local government and residents. Because they can act as intermediates, being invited to attend governmental meetings to be a heritage management committee, and having close relationships with residents, the government and political leaders.

Essentially, as inspired by the test of the Imagine method, effective and wide community consultation is key to balancing Chinese government-led methodology to be more inclusive and community-based, contributing to higher degrees of local participation and well-accepted heritage practices (Li et al., 2020c). Residents need to actively claim the power to finalise and approve a heritage scheme in the government-led process of decision-making. By doing so, residents can 1) contribute their everyday experiential knowledge of heritage value in the identification phase, 2) come up with innovative ideas and tools to bridge heritage values to local development trends in the programming phase, and 3) work together with the governments to execute and realise future heritage schemes in the final execution phase. To achieve this, a legal requirement is further needed to let local governments incorporate public feedback and interests, avoiding local political leaders wielding exclusive power in decision-making processes. Therefore, public participatory practices have been confirmed as a tool to find a balance point between top-down and bottom-up processes, namely,

incorporating citizen empowerment into government-led processes, tailored to cultural heritage management within Lijiang, and also, China as a whole.

This chapter proposed a way to implement community participation for cultural heritage management in urban China by developing a contextualised approach. It is an attempt to bridge cultural heritage management from theorisation, experimentation and even to a pragmatic process, bringing heritage studies to the mainstream of urban planning (Buckley et al., 2015; Rodwell, 2018). Through such a test of the Imagine method, existing heritage practices can be evaluated to examine the validation while enhancing future actions, by identifying and incorporating local historic urban landscapes of the past into present communities' daily life (Buckley et al., 2015). However, because of limited time and energy, we conducted the Imagine workshops only as an academic exercise with 30 people. And the investigation team can be made of more researchers from diversified skill backgrounds, such as urban planning, architecture, engineering, psychology, sociology, economy and ecology, to better demonstrate the complexity of historic urban landscapes through the Imagine method. Therefore, future studies are highly recommended to further explore community values and participation of heritage, with larger amounts of different stakeholders, or even, implemented to practical heritage projects.







## Chapter VI EPILOGUE

### *Conclusions and recommendations*

This chapter concludes the PhD thesis and responds to the research questions formulated in the prologue. The epilogue provides added value to the research through a summary of findings and contributions from previous chapters, reflecting on literature and making recommendations on community participation within cultural heritage management in China and also globally.

### Research relevance and statements

Urban conservation has evolved in focus from monuments to people in order to enable the continuity of heritage but also of their communities (Khalaf, 2019; Liu et al., 2020). Today, cultural heritage is considered to be a dynamic resource contributing to sustainable communities and urban development. Its scope of management has broadened further to include not only physical built heritage objects but also its historic environment, expressions, significance and identities (Rodwell, 2018). Furthermore, cultural heritage can be contested among various stakeholders and their interests, so its management approaches need to identify the local contexts of cultural, political, administrative and social-economic conditions (Liu et al., 2020).

The UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) recognises that community participation is key to cultural heritage management. It is recommended to be carried out through a dynamic and inclusive process of community participation (WHITRAP, 2016). Various tools, platforms and methodologies of community participation have been developed and applied globally in accordance with a bottom-up process of decision-making. However, as the local contexts of social regimes, governance systems and developmental conditions vary greatly, contextual knowledge and processes of community participation often differ between countries and regions (Li et al., 2020a). In China, where the government predominantly leads the decision-making process and prioritises efficiency-seeking and profit-orientation, rapid urbanisation poses great challenges to today's cultural heritage management practices. International bottom-up processes of community participation may not directly fit in such a local context of state-centralisation and rapid urbanisation (Li et al., 2020a). Therefore, the methodology of community participation in China differs from other international purely bottom-up approaches while it seeks to integrate citizen engagement into Chinese government-led processes.

Along with the hypothesis, this PhD thesis has studied the management approaches of cultural heritage in China, to further the methodological process of community participation in the context of state-centralisation, efficiency-seeking and rapid urbanisation. The thesis can be a valuable input for urban professionals, experts and decision-makers when implementing the HUL approach not only to cultural heritage management but also to broader urban conservation practices. The HUL approach adopts a more integrated and inclusive process to both heritage protection and community

improvement, contributing to enhancing social sustainability within our modern cities.

## Overview of the research questions and contributions

This thesis is elaborated into four sub-research questions. Discussed below are the brief responses to the four sub-questions, which are also refined as four interconnected strands representing the main contributions of the PhD research. Next, research findings are discussed to answer the main question: how can community participation in cultural heritage management be understood, assessed and enhanced within the rapidly urbanising Chinese context?

*Sub-question 1: how is community participation in cultural heritage management conceptualised in China from a global perspective within the state-of-the-art?*

*Contribution 1: Understanding community participation in Chinese cultural heritage management*

As evidenced in Chapter II, a systematic literature review, Chinese community participation is still limited and retains its contextual characteristics within cultural heritage management from a global perspective. International theories of cultural heritage management mainly focus on the enhancement of bottom-up processes in decision-making by positioning residents at the core. However, these international theoretical frameworks are not well applicable in Chinese contexts, where governments play a centralised administrative role. Chinese local conditions of cultural heritage management are manifested as state-centralisation, profit-driven and efficiency-seeking. Chinese community participation in cultural heritage management still lacks a strong theoretical basis and contextual knowledge. Therefore, in practice, several local governments, such as in Xi'an and

Guangzhou, have applied top-down approaches accompanying government-led platforms to communicate with the public. Residents' interests are excluded in the final management scheme and this triggers civil resistance and protests. However, wide community participation can be effective to mitigate social tension and balance the ideology of exclusive top-down processes in China (Verdini et al., 2017b). In the heritage management of Tianzifang and Wenhuali, local governments did sufficiently consult residents about their interests and needs, which were included in the final schemes. Excellent results were then achieved in local communities, even though these processes were government-led, rather than bottom-up citizen empowerment processes.

The novelty of this PhD research is that it identifies localised situations and develops a contextualised methodology of inclusive participatory governance for cultural heritage within the context of rapid urbanisation in China. To be able to do so, three interconnected issues had to be dealt with: 1) the need for a conceptual framework to be able to objectively assess the actual situation on cultural heritage management in China (in practice, policy and research), 2) the need for a contextual evaluation of Chinese policy and practice in participation in cultural heritage management, and 3) the need to empirically experiment with the development of participatory methods developed within Chinese contexts to strive towards deeper involvement of citizens and communities in a government-led process.

*Sub-question II: how is community participation assessed within the state-of-the-practice of cultural World Heritage protection and management in China?*

*Contribution II: Developing a conceptual framework to assess community participation*

Assessment frameworks can help raise transparency and enable systematic comparison in academic research (Li et al., 2020b). However, the assessment framework of community participation in international cultural heritage management is still missing. Through a comprehensive literature review in Chapter III, it was shown that existing assessment frameworks related to community participation have only touched on natural heritage conservation and broader heritage management schemes. To better understand the diversity and efficiency in levels of community engagement within cultural heritage management, an assessment framework has been conceptualised and established in this thesis by merging existing criteria and indicators. 23 elaborated indicators under four main criteria are identified in the assessment framework: 1) participation in decision-making; 2) the competence of participants; 3) the right to justice and confidence of participants; 4) empowerment and equity in cultural heritage management. This assessment framework scopes the concept of community participation, from the aspects of 1) residents' engagement in decision-making, 2) public awareness-raising and capacity-building, 3) social justice enhancement and 4) community empowerment.

Chapter III reports on the application of this tailored assessment framework to the management and protection practices of 36 Chinese cultural properties of World Heritage, which reveals over half of the properties have only conducted a minimal degree of community participation. Local

governments lead the processes of decision-making and benefit-sharing in cultural heritage management. The foci of Chinese cultural heritage management still lie more on the protection of physical materiality and universal values than on the continuity and expressions of traditional community life. Furthermore, public participatory relationships are not regularly evaluated, so residents lack platforms to negotiate with governments and protect their rights and benefits. The improvement of Chinese community participation needs to not only facilitate residents' involvement in local decision-making processes but also build public capacities and protect social justice and community values in cultural heritage management. Currently, Chinese community participatory practices are still limited, and further studies following the guidance of this comprehensive assessment framework are needed to help build local capacities in cultural heritage management.

*Sub-question III: how are local communities engaged currently, and what are the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of administrators and native and migrant residents towards local participatory practices in the case of Lijiang?*

*Contribution III: Positioning Chinese policies and current practices*

Following supranational guidance, Chinese governments have also set the goal of community participation in their daily working agendas of cultural heritage management, as presented in Chapter III. The national Central Government has issued policy documents institutionalising the mandatory procedures of soliciting and approving public opinion and protecting every citizen's right to know the scope of conservation projects and planning schemes. However, because of the restriction of Chinese civil society's

development, local governmental agencies and political leaders can have room to follow discretionary mandates through an exclusive decision-making process when implementing policies formulated by the national Central Government. Therefore, the degree of community participation can vary.

Within the empirical case study of the Old Town of Lijiang presented in Chapter IV, the local government carried out community participatory platforms, including governmental meetings (*tingzhenghui*) at the Management Bureau and community meetings (*kentanhui*) at the neighbourhood level to engage residents in the decision-making process. However, only community-based organisations and the representatives of residents were invited to attend the governmental meetings. Furthermore, the representatives of residents were all local elites, appointed by the local government. They were appointed based on their good reputation either for local business or vernacular cultural knowledge. Furthermore, these meetings were often set to inform residents about the government's decisions rather than consult with them to collect ideas. Residents felt unsatisfied and considered these participatory activities as tokenistic. The Management Bureau was and remains the true decision-maker controlling the decisions that shape local communities' life and little progress has been made in enhancing residents' skills in participating in local heritage management. Aligned with elites, business people and political leaders, the local government can wield much more power than residents, in decision-making leading to a minimal degree of community empowerment, public engagement and social justice.



Thus, although various participatory activities have been carried out in China, local heritage practices still rely on a planning and permission-approval process, rather than on active grassroots initiatives. Chinese cultural heritage management is generally government-led, wherein participatory platforms and activities are often carried out only to meet policy requirements institutionalised by the Central Government. Residents lack confidence, platforms and capabilities to participate in local heritage management processes. Local governments are the actual decision-maker predominantly leading processes and decisions, resulting in a minimal degree of local community participation.

*Sub-question IV: how can community participation be contextualised and enhanced to achieve sustainable heritage management in Lijiang by testing and adapting an international participatory method?*

*Contribution IV: Experimentally enhancing community participation within Chinese contexts*

International tools, platforms and methodologies of community participation have been mostly established in accordance with a bottom-up process of decision-making, as discussed in Chapter II. However, governance systems and developmental conditions in China are different from democratic states. As such, local heritage management practices in China are carried out in a government-led process. In addition, it is difficult to induce wide community participatory practices solely by residents' initiatives in China (Morrison & Xian, 2016). Therefore, the enhancement of Chinese community participation needs to build upon both local administrative characteristics and the government-led process.

As discussed in Chapter V, Chinese community participation has to seek a balanced methodology of both top-down and bottom-up processes, incorporating citizen empowerment in the government-led decision-making process. This balanced methodology needs to involve governments in initiating, guiding, funding and leading heritage practices to provide an enabling institutional environment and also manage participatory platforms. Residents should also be able to exchange their ideas and share knowledge with governments through public meetings. Local governments need to provide residents with opportunities to address their interests and adjust the management scheme to a negotiated agreement. These steps follow a negotiation process to mediate political, economic and cultural interests among various social actors. Residents need to be actively engaged throughout the whole management process and participate in public educational activities as well as exchange ideas with governments and professionals, rather than only be informed about the final scheme.

To ensure that negotiation processes go well, local elites and community-based organisations need to play a strong role in bridging conversations and passing on messages between residents and local governments (decision-makers). They are the organisers of community meetings at the neighbourhood level while also the residents' representatives in higher-level governmental meetings. To reach higher degrees of participation, local elites and community-based organisations need to play a more active role in collecting public ideas and then discussing these with the government. In the whole process, several rounds of community and governmental meetings may take place with open discussions and adjustments of heritage schemes to reach an agreement before the final (negotiated) scheme to be implemented. Therefore, there is also a legal requirement to ensure local

governments incorporate public feedback and community issues and to prevent local political leaders from wielding exclusive power in the decision-making process of local heritage management.

*The main research question: how can community participation in cultural heritage management be understood, assessed and enhanced within the rapidly urbanising Chinese context?*

In concluding this PhD thesis, the methodological approach and characteristics of Chinese community participation in cultural heritage management are recognised to be different from international bottom-up processes. Chinese community participation has to seek a hybrid structure and methodology of both top-down and bottom-up processes. In China, governments play a centralised and leading role in cultural heritage management practices. In particular, local governments are the actual implementors who provide an enabling institutional environment and also manage participatory platforms. Within such a government-led environment, effective community consultations and conversations can still make heritage practices more inclusive, help to avoid civil resistance and achieve well-accepted outcomes among the public.

Although Chinese cultural heritage management has set community participation in national policies and governmental working agendas, in practice local residents are only engaged to a minimal degree. To develop a positive government-led process, local governments need to sufficiently consult with residents from the very beginning and then incorporate their interests into final management schemes. Following governments' guidance and leadership, residents need platforms to actively negotiate their interests when adjusting and finalising heritage management schemes. Therefore, this PhD thesis proposes several suggestions to advance the Chinese

community participatory process: 1) local governments should initiate, guide and finance heritage practices; 2) residents need to be involved in the whole management process, including identifying local contexts, adjusting initial heritage schemes and approving final schemes; 3) local elites and community-based organisations, as the representatives of residents, should play a strong role in collecting public interests and then negotiating with local decision-makers; 4) a legal requirement is needed to ensure local governments incorporate public feedback and interests, and prevent local political leaders from wielding exclusive power in decision-making processes.

Compared to other international bottom-up processes, the Chinese theoretical framework of community participation could maintain the advantages of high-efficiency, solid technical assistance, administrative guidance and financial support from governments. But, there is also a disadvantage, which is that it is always difficult to balance the power between residents and decision-makers, especially when conflicts of economic interests occur. The proposed participatory process is contextual and needs to be further applied to Chinese heritage practices to examine its viability. Through the exploration of Chinese community participation, it has revealed that the methodologies of community participation can be different and localised between various local political and developmental contexts.

The originality of the thesis is pioneering to bring the concept and methodology of community participation into the discussion of cultural heritage management within the Chinese context of state-centralisation and efficiency-seeking. And the research design focuses on further revealing Chinese contextual characteristics of community participation, rather than

solely employing Eurocentric standards to judge Chinese practices. To some extent, the research findings can answer the questions of whether Chinese heritage management needs community engagement, and how the contextual methodology could be established and then well conducted. Therefore, this research contributes to urban literature by broadening the definition of community participation and its contextual execution process. Also, the PhD research and the case of Lijiang can be inspiring to heritage management theories and practices in other similar international contexts to better face the challenges of rapid urbanisation and globalisation.

## Research Limitations

The PhD thesis encountered several limitations during the whole research process. The first limitation is the inherent possibility of subjective bias when processing collected data including academic literature, official reports and fieldwork. For example, in the assessment of UNESCO official reports, the texts were coded manually to conduct a content analysis. Also, fieldwork transcripts from Lijiang were analysed qualitatively through the author's empirical review and analysis. However, the author strived to play a neutral role and build rigorous methodologies to avoid subjectivity and biases.

The second challenge was the selection of the case study, which was used to investigate a contextualised approach of Chinese community participation. As stated in the prologue, this thesis aims to contribute to the development of contextualised community participatory processes in China by exploring a cultural World Heritage property as the main studied case. However, Chinese cultural heritage in urban contexts varies in types, such as historic towns, neighbourhoods, cultural landscapes, museums and archaeological sites. The Old Town of Lijiang, as the selected case, is a human-inhabited and

rapidly urbanising heritage property. Other types of heritage may have different conditions regarding local community identification, urban scales and therefore may demand different management systems.

Next, the methodological approaches of this PhD thesis mainly relied on qualitative analysis methods as in-depth descriptive information was the research data, including official statements, local people's experiences and perceptions. With the time restraint of a PhD project, only a relatively small group of local communities could be investigated. While the results appear to be consistent and robust, a great number of results would improve the confidence of the research findings. Therefore, replication studies in other communities would be of great value. Quantitative approaches, such as numeric data-driven analysis and mathematical models, could also generate larger sample sizes.

Then, this research is pioneering to bring Chinese community participation into the international stage. The focus of this thesis is to explore Chinese cultural heritage management, and especially, how community participation in China is reflecting the international standards. To compare Chinese and international approaches, international academic databases can help directly approach related and newest publications. However, in the future for more in-depth Chinese nationwide research, academic publications are also needed to be collected from Chinese search machines and databases, to further reveal China's community participation details as well as international standards, in philosophies and also practices.

Lastly, the contextualised approach of community participation in Lijiang was developed at a theoretical level, based on a scoping academic exercise of workshops and interviews with residents. Furthermore, in the workshops,

I invited residents who were involved or familiar with local heritage protection and management practices but may not consider their profiles and backgrounds enough. It is necessary to increase the number of such experiments in practical heritage projects to further examine the potential and reveal the advantages and disadvantages of the approach, in practice. In summary, given the ongoing acceleration of urbanisation and socio-economic development, it is more urgent to experiment, develop and learn from such experiments with contextualised cultural heritage management methods to ensure a deeper involvement of citizens and communities in the balancing act of urban conservation and development.

### Future research recommendations

This PhD thesis has endeavoured to advance the methodology of community participation in the domain of cultural heritage management in China. At the same time, at a theoretical level, it has contributed more fundamentally to the field through the development of the assessment framework and in more general terms by putting a contextual lens on the participatory methods of cultural heritage management. It has proven the importance of residents and their participation in local heritage practices. However, as local developmental conditions are varied among countries and regions, the processes of community participation have retained different characteristics. To advance urban theories and academic literature, based on this PhD thesis, I propose three main points for future research.

First, at the theoretical level, future heritage studies can continue to explore the relationship between urban political science and cultural practices. Several political science research domains including public administration, political economy and human rights have been introduced into the heritage

field, leading to a more inter-disciplinary direction. Much international guidance and many national institutional regulations have been issued to ensure the protection of cultural heritage in various political environments and social regimes (Li et al., 2020b). Furthermore, the concept of contested heritage has been widely discussed, as cultural heritage is given varied values including social, economic, scientific, historic, etc., while different stakeholder groups show various and often conflicting interests (Liu et al., 2020). Therefore, current approaches to cultural heritage management develop a more holistic and integrative process, and inclusive public participation is an essential tool to reach consensus. Further exploration of political-cultural theory can contribute to the improvement of cultural heritage management approaches in various local conditions worldwide.

Second, at the methodological level, incorporated with the concept of sustainable urban development, the tools and methods of heritage studies can be further diversified. Recently, some digital tools have been applied in the urban planning field, such as online platforms, GIS, GPS and mobile phone applications (Li et al., 2020a). Their application has created many new methods to build research platforms and process data. These tools can also inspire international heritage studies. In this PhD thesis, a new assessment framework of community participation, established with systematic criteria and indicators, can be further applied and expanded through adding digital tools and quantitative data-driven processes, for example by analysing public conversations on social media and online questionnaire data. Digital tools can be implemented in the construction of participatory platforms for the public to contribute their ideas and exchange knowledge. Quantitative methods and data-driven analysis processes would also be useful to explore the inter-relation between criteria and indicators, and the nature of



community participation and its assessment approaches. Therefore, methodologies to facilitate community participation in heritage management need to be advanced further, and contemporary digital technologies and quantitative modelling are promising topics in the future, both in China and worldwide.

Lastly, on the level of local contextual knowledge and approaches, more studies on Chinese inclusive governance for cultural heritage and HUL are welcomed. Heritage studies have been positioned within the mainstream of the urban planning field (Ripp & Rodwell, 2015b). Current heritage management, therefore, focuses on integrative approaches placing heritage within broader urban settings, as recommended in HUL. During the field interviews and Imagine workshops in Lijiang, various local administrators stated and agreed that local residents should be engaged more in local heritage management, recognising the importance of community participation. Even still, future studies are welcomed to further the understanding of how the proposed frameworks in the thesis can be well implemented and what the challenges, difficulties and vulnerabilities are in Chinese practical heritage projects. Furthermore, given the types of Chinese cultural heritage are varied within urban contexts, one case study is not sufficient to build a general methodology. Therefore, Chinese approaches to community participation are still nascent, and more empirical case studies on cultural heritage are highly recommended. In future research, it would be interesting to explore the HUL approach in China further through the perspective of inclusive community participation with more international and national cases discussed to advance contextual knowledge.

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## **Appendix A. Overview of the reviewed publications**

| NO.                               | Reviewed Studies      | Continents | Participation Degrees |         |         |             |         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
|                                   |                       |            | Inform                | Consult | Involve | Collaborate | Empower |
| <b>Quantitative Analysis</b>      |                       |            |                       |         |         |             |         |
| 11                                | Chinese Studies       | -          | 100.00%               | 71.43%  | 42.86%  | 28.57%      | 0.00%   |
| 49                                | International Studies | -          | 100.00%               | 98.00%  | 68.00%  | 54.00%      | 12.00%  |
| <b>Chinese Case Studies</b>       |                       |            |                       |         |         |             |         |
| 1                                 | Wei (2018)            | Mainland   | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 2                                 | Kou (2018)            | Mainland   | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 3                                 | Fu (2017)             | Mainland   | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 4                                 | Verdini (2017)        | Mainland   | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 5                                 | Zhang(2017)-1         | Mainland   | √                     | -       | -       | -           | -       |
|                                   | Zhang(2017)-2         | SAR        | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 6                                 | Tan (2016)            | Mainland   | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 7                                 | Verdini (2015) -1     | Mainland   | √                     | -       | -       | -           | -       |
|                                   | Verdini (2015) -2     | Mainland   | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 8                                 | Fan (2014)-1          | Mainland   | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
|                                   | Fan (2014)-2          | Mainland   | √                     | -       | -       | -           | -       |
| 9                                 | Yung (2014)           | Mainland   | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 10                                | Zhai (2013)           | Mainland   | √                     | -       | -       | -           | -       |
| 11                                | Yau (2009)            | SAR        | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| <b>International Case Studies</b> |                       |            |                       |         |         |             |         |
| 12                                | Tipnis(2017)          | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 13                                | MacRae(2017)          | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 14                                | Fitri(2017)           | Asia       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 15                                | Husnéin(2017)         | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 16                                | Musa(2016)            | Asia       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |

(Continued)

## Appendix A. Overview of the reviewed publications (Continued)

| NO. | Reviewed Studies     | Continents | Participation Degrees |         |         |             |         |
|-----|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
|     |                      |            | Inform                | Consult | Involve | Collaborate | Empower |
| 17  | Hammami(2016)-1      | Asia       | √                     | -       | -       | -           | -       |
|     | Hammami(2016)-2      | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 18  | Stephens(2015)       | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 19  | Nagaoka(2015)        | Asia       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 20  | Human(2015)          | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 21  | Poulios(2014)        | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | √       |
| 22  | Rahman(2013)         | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 23  | Aykan(2013)          | Asia       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 24  | Najimi(2011)         | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 25  | Atalay(2010)         | Asia       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 26  | Fletcher(2007)       | Asia       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 27  | Ferretti(2018)       | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 28  | Ferreira(2018)       | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | √       |
| 29  | Achille(2017)        | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 30  | Achig-Balarezo(2017) | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 31  | Oevermann(2016)      | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 32  | Kyriakidis(2015)     | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 33  | Lewis(2015)          | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | √       |
| 34  | Conforti(2015)       | Europe     | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 35  | Malheiro(2014)       | Europe     | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 36  | Sully(2014a)         | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 37  | Sully(2014b)         | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 38  | Lekakis(2013)        | Europe     | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 39  | Walker(2011)         | Europe     | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |

(Continued)

## Appendix A. Overview of the reviewed publications (Continued)

| NO. | Reviewed Studies | Continents    | Participation Degrees |         |         |             |         |
|-----|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
|     |                  |               | Inform                | Consult | Involve | Collaborate | Empower |
| 40  | Stenseke(2009)   | Europe        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 41  | Wilson(2008)     | Europe        | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 42  | Waterton(2005)   | Europe        | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 43  | Chinyele(2018)   | Africa        | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 44  | Chipangura(2017) | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 45  | Bruku(2015)      | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 46  | Ntui(2015)       | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 47  | Borona(2014)     | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 48  | Schmidt(2014)    | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | √       |
| 49  | Eoin(2013)       | Africa        | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 50  | Cissé(2012)      | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 51  | Sidi(2012)       | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | √           | √       |
| 52  | Chirikure(2012)  | Africa        | √                     | √       | √       | -           | -       |
| 53  | Wilson(2016)     | Oceania       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 54  | Kyi(2016)        | Oceania       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 55  | Woodley(2014)    | Oceania       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 56  | Woodley(2013)    | Oceania       | √                     | √       | √       | √           | -       |
| 57  | MacKay(2010)     | Oceania       | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 58  | Dormaels(2016)   | North America | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 59  | Inniss(2012)     | North America | √                     | √       | -       | -           | -       |
| 60  | Labrador(2011)   | North America | √                     | √       | √       | √           | √       |

## Appendix B. The interview guide

(Original Chinese version)

|   |
|---|
| 请填写或勾选（√）您认为符合自身经历的问题答案，并作简短解释。   |
| 基本信息  |
| 日期：            地点：<br>性别:男/女    民族：    学历：小学/初中/高中/大学/硕士/博士<br>年龄: 0-12/13-17/18-25/26-35/36-45/46-55/56-65/66+<br>职业:政府/居委会/房东/租户商贩/工人/教师/游客，其他：<br>是否工作在古城内：是/否 若是，工作区为:大研/白沙/束河，时长：<br>是否居住在古城内：是/否 若是，居住区为:大研/白沙/束河，时长：   |
| 问卷问题  |
| 一、居民如何参与到古城保护及管理工作中<br>1) 社区生活质量的提升在古城保护工作中是否重要？<br>社区生活和古城保护同等重要 / 古城保护更加重要<br>理由：<br>2) 是否有必要让居民参与到古城保护管理工作讨论中？<br>是 / 否    理由：<br>3) 居民（代表）是否能参与到管理决策层中？<br>是 / 否    具体描述：<br>4) 居民现在在古城管理工作中的作用是什么，如制定鼓励及禁止商业清单居民的作用？<br>支持并执行政府决议 / 提出小幅度意见 / 提出大幅度修改意见<br>具体描述：<br>5) 居民是否有渠道了解古城管理或保护项目信息，如传单，网站，微信群，社区会议？ 是 / 否    具体描述：<br>6) 居民（代表）是否有同古管局、古城管理公司合作参与古城的保护项目工作经历，如基础建设，文化广场方案设计？<br>是 / 否    具体描述：<br>7) 古管局是否有沟通和明确居民在古城保护中的责任和具体工作，如监督违建扩建？ 是 / 否    具体描述：<br>8) 古管局、街道办、社区、客栈协会等，他们是否有促进居民参与到古城保护工作中？ 是 / 否    具体描述： |

|   |
|---|
| <p>9) 社区居委会、客栈协会等居民组织在日常古城管理工作中同居民是什么关系和角色?<br/>传达政府决议 / 辅助政府工作 / 维护居民利益<br/>具体描述:</p>  |
| <p>二、如何提升居民参与到古城保护中的意识及能力</p> <p>1) (古管局) 是否有措施提升居民对古城保护重要性的认知, 如文化活动, 学习讲座? 是 / 否 具体描述:</p> <p>2) (古管局) 是否有措施提升居民对古城保护的专业知识, 如咨询会, 修缮手册? 是 / 否 具体描述:</p> <p>3) (古管局) 是否有措施提升居民的商业经营能力, 如办证指导, 创业就业、讲座? 是 / 否 具体描述:</p>   |
| <p>三、如何保护居民在古城管理及保护工作中权益</p> <p>1) 客栈协会、社区居委会、社区小组等居民组织能否参与到古城保护讨论中?<br/>是 / 否 具体描述:</p> <p>2) 居民是否有途径可以向古管局提出意见或者建议, 如微信群, 论坛, 投诉电话?<br/>是 / 否 具体描述:</p> <p>3) 古城民居的产权状况是什么百分比? 你(经营)的民居是什么产权? 私有 / 国有 / 集体所有<br/>具体描述:</p>  |
| <p>四、如何促进居民参与及社区生活提升</p> <p>1) 古管局是否有措施能提高居民在古城保护中的收入, 如雇用居民、门票分红、补贴? 是 / 否 具体描述:</p> <p>2) 居民修缮自家房屋时, (是 / 否) 有补助或优惠政策; 公共项目的资金来源是什么? 具体描述:</p> <p>3) 是否知道古管局在组织听证会、社区恳谈会都有哪些人参与?<br/>是 / 否 具体描述:</p> <p>4) 是否觉得原住民的传统生活方式能促进古城的传统文化价值提升? 是 / 否 理由:</p> <p>5) 是否知道古管局如何解决古城中居民的日常生活问题, 如治安、噪音、物价、教育?<br/>是 / 否 具体描述:</p> |

(English translated version)

|  |
|--|
| Basic information  |
| Date:            Place:<br>Gender:    Ethnicity:    Education:<br>Age: 0-12/13-17/18-25/26-35/36-45/46-55/56-65/66+<br>Occupation:<br>If working within the old town:    Yes/No    For (how long):<br>If living within the old town:    Yes/No    For (how long):  |
| Interview questions  |
| Part 1: Residents' participation in the old town protection and decision-making processes<br>Q1: Is improving the quality of community life equally important to the old town protection?<br>1) Yes, equally 2) heritage protection > community life 3) heritage protection < community life    Why:<br>Q2: Is it necessary to include residents in the discussion and decision-making of the old town protection?    Yes/No. Why:<br>Q3: Can residents participate in the decision-making body/committee of the old town?    Yes/No. How:<br>Q4: What is the role of (representatives of) residents in local heritage protection practices? For example, is there any training offered to residents or how do they play a role in the approval of the business list?<br>1) Support government decisions 2) minor revision 3) major revision<br>How:<br>Q5: Do residents have platforms to access heritage project information, such as flyers, websites, WeChat groups or community meetings?<br>Yes/No. How:<br>Q6: Do residents/you have the experience of collaborating with the Management Bureau or the management company in heritage projects, such as giving input into their designs, details, public building or plaza construction?    Yes/No. How:<br>Q7: Does the Management Bureau assign specific responsibilities to residents, such as monitoring illegal buildings?    Yes/No. How:<br>Q8: Do Residents' Committees or the guesthouse association play a role in facilitating residents' participation in the old town protection?<br>Yes/No. How:<br>Q9: What is the role of local resident-based organisations such as Residents' Committees and the guesthouse association when working with residents?<br>1) Inform about government decisions 2) support government work<br>3) protect residents' benefits    How: |

|  |
|--|
| <p>Part 2: Awareness-raising and competence-building actions</p> <p>Q1: What are the actions taken to raise residents' awareness of local heritage protection by the Management Bureau, such as cultural activities, lectures?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q2: What are the actions taken to build the capacity of residents for heritage protection by the Management Bureau, such as consultation meetings, maintenance manuals?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q3: What are the actions taken to build the business skills of residents by the Management Bureau, such as certificate-processing, entrepreneurial guidance, lectures?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p>   |
| <p>Part 3: Actions to protect residents' rights to heritage protection and management</p> <p>Q1: Can the guesthouse association, Residents' Committees and other community groups participate in the old town protection and management discussion?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q2: Do residents have platforms to contribute their ideas or challenge government decisions, such as WeChat group, website, lines?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q3: Do you know the ownership of this heritage property? How about yours? What is the proportion?<br/>1) Private-owned 2) state-owned 3) collective-owned</p>   |
| <p>Part 4: Actions to empower local residents and improve community life</p> <p>Q1: What are the actions to improve residents' income from the old town protection processes, such as residents' employment, shares or living subsidies? Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q2: When renovating houses, is there any financial support from the government? What are the financial sources for public projects?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q3: Do you know who is invited to the government meeting in the Management Bureau and the community meeting at the neighbourhood level? Yes/No. How:</p> <p>Q4: Do you think the traditional lifestyles of native residents can enhance the cultural and heritage values of the old town?<br/>Yes/No. Why:</p> <p>Q5: Do you know how the Management Bureau handles local living issues, such as security, noise, price and education?<br/>Yes/No. How:</p> |



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## ***Curriculum Vitae***

Ji Li was born and raised in Yunnan Province, China. Trained as an architect and urban designer, Ji Li received both his Bachelor Degree of Architecture (2014) and the Master Degree of Engineering in Architectural Design and Theory (2017) at Xi'an Jiaotong University, China. Prior to joining the Unit of Architectural Urban Design and Engineering at TU/e, his work focused on urban heritage values and community place-making research. In September 2017, Ji Li started his PhD research in the Chair of Urbanism and Urban Architecture with Prof. Pieter van Wesemael, Prof. Ana Pereira Roders and dr. Sukanya Krishnamurthy. His research interests focus on the integrative management approach of community participation, World Heritage monitoring and sustainable urban development.

## ***List of Publications***

Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2020). Community Participation in Cultural Heritage Management: A Systematic Literature Review Comparing Chinese and International Practices. *Cities*, 96, 102476.

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Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2020). Informing or consulting? Exploring community participation within urban heritage management in China. *Habitat International*, 105, 102268.

Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2021). Imagine the Old Town of Lijiang: Contextualising community participation for urban heritage management in China. *Habitat International*, 108, 102321.

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